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F O R T H E D E G R E E O F

M A S T E R O F A R T S

Elsie Thomas Culver

A general survey of the history of Shechem to about 586 B.C.

Naomichi Kodaira

Reinhold Niebuhr's conception of the relationship between Chrisitan Ethics and natural law

Minora Oda

An archaeological study on some Greek cities in Galilee

A GENERAL SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF SHECHEM TO 586 B.C.

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B. A., University of California, 1918

THESIS
Submitted in the Department of
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FOREWARD

During the first year classes in Old Testement Literature and Exegesis at Pacific School of Religion, 1938-39, Dr. James Muilenburg several times suggested the enticing possibilities for a thesis concerning one or another of the ancient sanctuaries of Palestine. It was around these places that life in Biblical times had revolved. They were the centers of trade and culture. Here contracting parties came to find witnesses for their agreements, and quarreling neighbors brought their grievances to lay before the elders, whose mishpatim evolved into the earliest codes. Here the story tellers regaled their fascinated listeners with the recital of tribal history, hero legends, speculations as to how various natural phenomena, including man, came into being, or why surrounding villages or landmarks came to be called by their particular names. Thus around these sanctuaries grew up the law and the literature of the early Hebrews. As one conceives of the Old Testament materials clustering around these various holy places, many tangled threads can be separated, and some, at least, of the knots may be untied.

Particularly intriguing appeared those ancient sanctuaries which had been the seats of primitive religion

long before the Hebrews had established their worship of Yahweh there, perhaps even before the advent of the patriarchal migrations. And of these none stood forth quite so vividly as Shechem, which seemed to demand, above all the others, to be considered.

It seems inconceivable that scholars have so neglected this remarkable city. It has been quite impossible to do justice to the subject in this limited scope, even by confining my consideration to events prior to 586 B.C., when, as a matter of fact, the questions in regard to Shechem are usually considered as just coming to a focus. Even in this early period, however, the approach had to be limited. One should surely examine the pre-exilic prophets for such light as their utterances or writings throw on Shechem's history. For while they never mention the name, that in itself may be eloquent.

It has been impossible to do more than suggest the problems about Shechem itself, and the more general questions on which a better understanding of Shechem's history should throw some light.

Because of this strict limiting of the subject, it may appear that the presentation is one-sided. Probably it is. We need the balance which the study of the other sanctuaries, Hebron, Bethel and Dan, for instance, would supply. But if I have been biased on the side of Shechem,

the bias has been prompted by a desire to obtain a hearing for a tradition which has been sadly neglected, and which I feel should be considered by critical Biblical scholars.

I want to thank Dr. Muilenburg not only for suggesting a most stimulating and gratifying subject on which to work, but for his constant help and inspiration in working through the materials, as well as his patient endeavor to restrain my own enthusiasm somewhere within the bounds of scholarship.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Location and Identification

In the highlands of Ephraim, twenty-eight miles almost due north from Jerusalem, lay the ancient city of Shechem.

Its site was identified in 1930 by H. Thiersh and G. Hölscher as that of the modern village of Balata, and recent excavations by E. Sellin and G. Welter have on the whole confirmed the identification.[1] John Garstang, however, agreeing with older authorities, including Eusebius, continues to identify the Shechem of Abimelech's time with Nablus, the Neapolis of Roman days. He thinks, however, that in the time of Joshua "it stood on its ancient site near the south-east entrance to the valley, at Balata, where later, in the age of Abimelech, rose the tower of Shechem."[2]

The attempt of the Deuteronomic editor to locate Shechem near Jericho, in Deuteronomy 11:30, is probably a southern writer's device to refuse recognition to a northern rival. If Shechem and her holy mountain could not be elim-

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[1] O. Eissfeldt, "Sichem," RGG 5, sp. 471 ff.

[2] John Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 398. See Judges 9:46, 51.

inated altogether, as the Deuteronomists could have wished, at least the narrative could be confused.[1]

The fact that Jacob's well is nearly a mile from Nablus, the statement of Eusebius that Sychar lay east of Neapolis, and the impossibility of identifying the Salem of this locality with Shechem, Eusebius and Jerome not withstanding, are all evidence that in early times as now, more than one town occupied the high pass, and that Shechem may have migrated from one site to another in the course of her history, a not infrequent phenomenon in the near east.[2]

B. Name

The name Shechem, according to Eusebius, came from Shechem, the son of Hamor, the Hivite,[3] prince of the land, who gave his name to the town in which he lived.[4] If this

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[1]Theophile Meek, Hebrew Origins, p. 27. There are similar evidences of tampering in Deut. 27:4 and Josh.8:30, where the relative positions of Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal have been changed. We will discuss this more at length later.

[2]H.B.Hackett, "Shechem," in Smith's Bible Dictionary. See Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel I, p. 151, for the location of various "shoulder" towns in the age of Abimelech.

[3]Horite is better. See below, p. 18 f.

[4]Gen.33:18, 19 (E). Mention of the sanctuary at Shechem, Gen. 16:6 (J), and of Abraham's visit there, would then be used in anticipation, but there is no objection to that. Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, "Shechem."

were the case, however, it would seem strange that the city was not named for Hamor, since the father had not only the presitge of superior age, but apparently more initiative as well if we may judge from the Biblical accounts.[1]

The probability is, however, that the prince of the town took his name from the town, as others of his family very likely did, too. The origin of the name , meaning saddle or shoulder, is a natural one, for the narrow valley makes a sort of saddle between the two great mountains that tower to the north and south of it.[2] There would, of course, be the possibility that the Hebrew word for saddle came from the name of the city, but it seems less likely.

It is significant that neither of the geneological schemes of the Chronicler mentions Shechem.[3] By this time, Shechem was already regarded as the seat of heresy, as we find it in New Testament times. It was , "the city of fools,"[4] and the people of the highlands of Ephraim had long since become "Samaritans," "people who had devils" according to the Jerusalemites, but "true observers of the

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[1]Gen. 33:18 ff.

[2]Eusebius, Onomasticon, ed. Klostermann, p. 151.

[3]I Chron. 7:14-19, 2:21-23.

[4]Test. Levi c. 7; cf Ecclus. 50:25: "the foolish people who dwell in Shechem." The modern name Nablus may come from , fool, but more likely from Neapolis, the "new city" of Roman times. It is difficult to determine to what extent folk etymology has played with the name.

law", if we can accept their own interpretation of the name.[1]

Variants of the name appear as follows:

Sichem, Gen. 12:6

Shalem, Gen. 33:18 (more likely a nearby town)

Sychem, Acts 7:16

Sychar, John 4:5

Suchem or Sikimon, LXX

S-k-m-m, ENG MK

Sa-ak-mi, Amarna Letters, Kn. 289

S-k-m, R^2 (Pap.Anas. I 21:5)[2]

Skinner notes that the plural termination which appears in the Egyptian inscriptions of the twelfth dynasty[3] as S-K-M-M and in the Amarna letters as Sa-ak-mi, is the oldest form in Hebrew, too, since it occurs in the LXX of Gen.33:18, 35:4-5.[4] Is this evidence that Shechem occupied more than one site, perhaps alternately? Or, as seems more likely, was this name Shechem a term loosely applied to the various villages on the "shoulder"?

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[1] J.A. Montgomery, The Samaritans, note B, p. 318.

[2] Ibid, also p. 156. Also M. Seligsohn,"Shechem", Jewish Encyclopaedia, v. 11, p. 318; G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 367.

[3] J.W. Jack, "Recent Biblical Archeology", Expos. Times 50, p. 406, describes these Egyptian texts, inscribed on earthen figurines from the twelfth dynasty. The figures represent captives ready to be slain, and are apparently considered magical. The inscriptions on them are lists of place names. Some names are Palestinian, among them Shechem. There may be mention also of the "Hebrews" (ʿApiru), which would be most remarkable at this early date.

[4] J. Skinner, Genesis, ICC, p. 246

C. Excavations

We could wish for much better archeological evidence than is ours in regard to Shechem, though digging, started 1913-14, has been going on consistently since 1926. Unfortunately, the question of chronology was not sufficiently considered in the early excavations, and much valuable evidence has been irretrievably lost.

Unfortunately, too, Nablus, a town of some 18,000 population,[1] covers a portion of the land which it would be very desirable to excavate to discover whether it, as well as Balata, had been occupied in the early days of Palestine, perhaps alternately with the site which has been unearthed.[2]

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[1] H. Luke and E. Keith-Roach, Handbook of Palestine and Trans-Jordan, 3rd edition, p. 38.

[2] The great tower in the excavations uncovered at Balata, presumably of considerably later date than the massive walls themselves, has led to the speculation that this is the "tower of Shechem" referred to in Judges 9:45,46, and that the city proper lay nearer Nablus. Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 249. In the appendix, p. 399, he says:

> "Excavations at Balata, commenced in 1914 by Prof. E. Sellin, have shown that occupation of the site began in E.B.A. and that the city was founded and fortified in M.B.A. I, soon after 2000 B.C. Its great Cyclopean walls, comparable with those of Tell Nasbeh and Jericho, had a circuit of about 800 yards, enclosing a roughly circular area of about eleven or twelve acres, one of the largest fenced cities of the country. A gateway reconstruction on the north shows N. Syrian or possibly Hittite influence (ZDPV 26, p. 235). A palace adjoined this gateway, and a "temple" lay nearby, in the temenos of which was found a Hyksos scarab. Scarabs of early XVIII dynasty and other Egyptian objects were found in a house containing tablets. Houses of M.B.A. were found to have been destroyed by fire. The L.B.A. was represented by characteristic pottery, including numerous painted and imported fabrics and a large scarab. More recently, 1929-30, excavations have been continued by Dr. Welter,

It is also unfortunate, from the point of view of American students, that most of the findings have been published in German or Dutch. Bishop H. M. Du Bose, who was at Shechem with Sellin and contributed two articles to the Biblical Review, was, as the titles of his articles would indicate, primarily concerned with theology.[1] The excavations at Shechem, he believes, point back to a post-deluvian monotheism and argue for the "truth and clarity of the Genesis stories and the historical basis of the patriarchal toledoths and geneologies." To such use may archeology be turned!

Dr. G. Welter, long in charge of excavations at Aegina, took over the work at Balata in the summer of 1928 for the German Archeological Institute.

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disclosing the pyramidal foundations of a tower, crowned by a chamber 85 x 68 feet, with walls 16 feet in thickness, flanked by two towers."

Albright, Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 56, tells us that the M.B. town was much less extensive than the town of the L.B. period. He says:

"A typical Hyksos fortress has been found under the remains of the later Canaanite and Israelite citadel, the Biblical Millo. Shortly afterward, perhaps about 1600 B.C., though the date remains uncertain, . . . the city was surrounded by a massive cyclopaean wall, the finest example of Canaanite masonry which we have in Palestine."

See also "Notes and News", PEFQS 1929, p. 2, 118.

[1] H. M. Du Bose, "Shechem and Primeval Monotheism", Biblical Review 12, p. 171 ff. (April 1927); "Shechem and the Historicity of Jacob", Biblical Review 13, p. 528 ff. (Oct. 1928).

The findings seem to offer evidence of the continuous occupation of the site from the M.B.A. to about 67 A.D., when the city was destroyed by Vespasian. Two massive city walls have been uncovered, with monumental gateways in each. One of these is from the first half of the L.B.A. From the M.B.A. comes the massive rampart of marl, similar to the one discovered at Hazor, and seeming to represent the oldest part of the Millo or acropolis of Judges 9.[1] At the foot of Mt. Gerizim was the temple of Baal-berith, with Canaanite cult objects from the L.B.A.[2]

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[1]Albright, "Progress in Palestinian Archeology during the year 1928", BASOR 33, p. 8. Albright thinks Sellin's identification of certain buildings in this acropolis as temples, one of early date, others more recent, is doubtful. The altars found there will be discussed later, as will other specific finds, as their relation to Biblical history becomes apparent. See appendix for table of archeological periods.

[2]Illustrated London News, June 18, 1932.

CHAPTER II

SHECHEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL

A. Surroundings

Many features of Shechem's geographical position tended to make it the natural capital of Israel.[1] It lay high in the narrow pass that was the one practical route between the Jordan valley and the coast. The water supply was abundant.[2] As we have said, it formed a sort of saddle, flanked on the north by towering Mt. Ebal, and on the south by the sacred, though slightly lower, Mt. Gerizim.[3] From Ebal, Mt. Carmel and the Plain of Megiddo are in plain view to the north. To the east, beyond the fertile fields that supply Shechem's agricultural needs, Transjordania may be seen. From Mt. Gerizim, one sees Mt. Osha in Gilead, Mt. Hermon, Mt. Carmel, the Plain of Sharon on the coast and the

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[1]It is generally conceded that Shechem was the capital of the tribe of Manasseh. Chronological schemes of Josh. 17:1b-2 (J) and Nu. 26:28-34 (P), though differing in arrangement, both make Shechem a descendent of the original Manasseh. See Driver, "Manasseh" in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, p. 231, for table of conflicts.

[2]There are no less than eighty springs in the Vale of Shechem. Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 105.

[3]Ebal is 3077 feet high, Gerizim some 200 feet lower, But the Samaritans are still inclined to protest that their sacred Mt. Gerizim is the higher.

and the sea itself.[1] Olmstead reads, in Jotham's poem of Judges 9:8, a tribute, far older than its context, to Shechem's abundant agricultural wealth.[2]

The two mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, are rocky limestone terraces, but the surrounding country is one of pleasant contrasts -- of rolling hills, fertile plains (though usually small in area), meadows and vales which break up the country and form easy passes both north and south and east and west. The broad Barley-vale, Wady esh Shaᶜir, goes past Samaria up to Shechem. A gentle series of rises makes access from the coast easy, while Wady Farᶜah winds up to Shechem from opposite the Jabbok and forms the main trunk road to the east. The Bukeia, the Wady el Maleh, and the Wady el Khashneh (an ancient road to Shechem), run up from the north. Such was the position and the "outgoings" of Shechem in Mt. Ephraim.[3]

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[1] Cf. Josh. 20:7, I Kings 12:25, Judges 9:7, Jos. Ant. 4:8:48, Gen. 37:12 ff, Judges 21:19. See also F.L. Cohen, "Shechem", Jewish Encyclopaedia.

[2] History of Palestine and Syria, p. 104. Cf. G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 327.

[3] G. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 327, 333. Today Nablus is the seat of the government of the province and the connecting link of the telegraphic systems of east and west Jordan and the coastal plain.

B. Commercial advantages

Egypt, travelling northward in the days of her dominance, passed by Shechem, taking her armies and her trade up the coastal plain and northeast from Yemma, through the Wady Arah to Megiddo. Perhaps Egypt was as well pleased to pass by, and leave Shechem in isolation. To subdue the city would have been difficult, if indeed possible, and of little real benefit. So long as Shechem was not politically ambitious, apparently showing little interest in organizing or joining leagues of other cities of Canaan, Egypt was not disposed to quarrel with her high degree of autonomy. This sense of autonomy quickly developed into rebellion and independence when Egyptian control relaxed in Canaan generally.[1]

But with the possible exception of Hazor, no city of ancient Palestine was so favorably situated so far as eastern trade routes were concerned. We have spoken of Shechem's situation on the natural route from trans-Jordan to the coastal plain via the ford of the Jordan at El Damieh and up the Wady Far'ah, and the one from the northwest via Wadi El Shair from Yemma. It was likewise on the Hebron-Beersheba-Hazor trade route of patriarchal times which the Amorite Abraham followed along the ridge of the mountains.[2]

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[1] Amarna Letters, Kn. 289. Garstang, Heritage of Solomon, p. 15 ff.

[2] Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 83.

Just as Jerusalem always kept the ways open and the contacts alive with the country to her south, so Shechem kept the lines of communication open with the trans-Jordan country. Whether the trans-Jordan Manasseh was, as the Biblical accounts would indicate, the original settlement, or a colonization project of the tribe, is beside the point: the contact was there, and Shechem's relations with her eastern neighbors were far more cordial than with those to the south, especially Jerusalem.[1]

Garstang is inclined to lay great emphasis on Shechem's isolation during the early stages of her history. Dotham, he points out, was the nearest great neighbor, and this city shared the fortunes of Esdraelon rather than Shechem. Shiloh may have been under Shiloh's influence, but her early history is obscure. For the most part, he thinks, the highlands were given over largely to primeval forest, with only an occassional unwalled village.[2]

George Adams Smith, on the other hand, emphasizes the lavishness and hospitality of the country, its "openness" to strangers and new ideas, a quality that ultimately became its downfall.[3]

In the very center of this highland country, on the heights overlooking practically all Palestine, was Shechem,

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[1] G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 120 f.

[2] Garstang, Heritage of Solomon, p. 99 ff.

[3] G.A. Smith, op.cit. p. 331

quite probably an alien city, and very likely not even of Semitic blood.[1] She boasted the strongest walls in Palestine. She worshipped at the shrine of the strange god, El Berith. But I shall try to show that she was for centuries the focal point of Hebrew religion, and that her claims rivalled, if they did not exceed, those of Jerusalem as the most important city in the united kingdom.

C. Strategic situation

Strategically, Shechem had its disadvantages. From the Mediterranean, the pass marked the one break in the hill silhouette, and was the logical point of entrance. Thus of all the ancient cities of the Jordan Valley, only Shechem was in full view and a tempting sight to the invader from the coastal plain. The same was true of the approach from the east. All the other chief sites of Israel's early life lay hidden away, scarcely to be seen till one came upon them.[2] But Shechem sat high and proud on the shoulder of her holy mountain.

Although the pass was an excellent position from which to defend the country to its east, it offered no possible protection to the land nearer to the coast.

The "openness" of the highlands of Ephraim and Manas-

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[1] R.A.S. Macalister, A Century of Excavation in Palestine, p. 271. Cf. references to Speiser's articles, p. 16 ff., below.

[2] G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 120.

seh as a whole, made resistance to an invader difficult, while fertile plains were a constant temptation to the raider.[1] The off-hand manner of the "assignment" of these highlands to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, in addition to their regular alotment, without either provision for help in their conquest or protest from the other tribes at the extra benefit thus bestowed, is significant.[2]

There is no mention of the conquest of this territory, the Israelites having passed by with apparent unconcern from Bethel to Bethshean. Is this evidence that it was not conquered, or that it fell without a struggle? Shechem is significantly absent from the list of conquered kings in Deuteronomic report Josh. 12:9 ff. Was Shechem never really taken over by the Hebrews? Or did they settle there by treaty rather than conquest? Or may Shechem, the home, the shrine and the burial ground of the patriarchs, have maintained something of the original Abrahamic traditions and religion, and was return to that city the conscious objective of the Josephite tribes when they left Egypt? We shall have to consider the evidence along these lines later.

At any rate, with the breakup of the kingdom, and Israel's new national consciousness and responsibilities, the military weakness of Shechem's position seemed intolerable. Her walls, once thought inpregnable, seemed less so

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[1] G.A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 328.

[2] Josh. 17:14 ff.

against the military offensive equipment purported to be used by the rising power of Assyria, against cities that came in her way. Moreover, Ahab undoubtedly felt the desire to expand and build a really fine capital worthy of Israel's new splendor and typical of the northern kingdom as a whole. Both Shechem's position and her traditions would be cramping. The capital was moved to the new site at Samaria.

D. A religious center

As we have pointed out, Shechem was the natural center of Palestine. But much of her prestige was religious. Ancient tradition told that Mt. Gerizim alone was not covered by the deluge, and it was well known that the midsummer sun cast no shadow in Jacob's well. Here, at Mt. Gerizim, was the "navel" of Palestine.[1] Here was the sort of place, as any primitive people would have recognized, that the gods would make known their wills.

There was an oak near the well, an oak in the rustling of whose leaves primitive man detected, and the more forward sought to interpret, the voice of God.[2] There

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[1] E. Burrows, "Some Chronological Patterns in Babylonian Religion", The Labyrinth, S.H. Hooke, ed., p. 43 ff.

[2] Balata - Aramaic, Ballut, oak. Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 250.
Is it possible that the tradition of the sacred tree survived in this place and has given the modern village its name? Oesterley and Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 22, hold that Abraham knew of the tree and came there expecting an oracle. It was the presence of the tree that made the

can be little doubt but that religion was intimately involved in the founding of Shechem. But who were the founders?

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spot holy. They say, however, that the terebinth was an evergreen, which would rule out our speculation in regard to the name Balata.

W. Robertson Smith, The Religion of the Semites, p. 179, n., suggests that this was a sacred grove, since Deut. 11:30 speaks of the "trees of the revealer" in the plural, but we have already noticed tampering with this verse, and it is doubtful if we can put much significance in the form of the word.

CHAPTER III

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Ethnic background

The story of Shechem belongs primarily to the "prehistoric" age of Palestine, that is, to a time long before our first consecutive written records began to be compiled. It is a story of the vigorous days when new stirrings of life, or population pressures, or perhaps lack of rain on the high plateaus, sent tribe after tribe from surrounding, often more highly cultured areas, swarming over the narrow strip of fertile but politically backward coastland at the eastern end of the Mediterranean.

It is probable that the earliest inhabitants of Shechem were a non-Semitic people, though the tradition of the great size of the Shechemites[1] is against their being of the same race as the diminutive cave-dwelling men of Gezer.[2]

Quite possibly there was no city here until the

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[1] See chart in Jewish Encyclopaedia, "Shechem", showing the Samaritans are still the tallest people in Syria. Cf. Montgomery, The Samaritans, p. 25, re type, physiognomy, etc.

[2] G. A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible, p. 103. Cf. E. A. Speiser, "Ethnic Movements in the Near East", AASOR 13, p. 27: Popular etymology relegated the Horites to caves, hence the frequent substitution of Hivites for Horites in many passages. See references to Speiser below, p. 18, ff.

Amorite (Semite) migrations of the third millenium. This migration was a great spreading out of the Amorites from the Lebanon country, whence they swarmed to the east and south. The eastern migration followed along the Euphrates, and it was from this stock that the great Hammurabi sprang.

Pederson thinks that it was the south-western branch of this migration which, travelling down into Palestine, settled the central section, around Shechem and especially Gibeon. This people were still an active element in the population there when the Israelites came into the country. They kept up their contacts with their tribesmen who settled in the east, and formed a permanent anti-Egyptian party in Palestine.[1]

This is in line with E.A. Speiser's findings concerning the general migratory movements in the near east: that during the second millenium, Palestine, as well as Babylon and Assyria, Mitanni,Aleppo, Tunip, Qatna, and even to the borders of Egypt and Nuzi, east of the Tigris, was overrun by wandering Hurrians, a new ethnic group that included many tribes of familiar name but doubtful origin, e.g., the Biblical Horites.[2]

Still more recently, J. W. Jack has expressed the opinion that the Hittites arrived in Palestine about 2000 B.C. from Kussara, and by the time of Abraham, whom he

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[1] J. Pederson, Israel, p. 3.

[2] Speiser, op.cit., p. 30.

apparently places rather late, had penetrated as far south as Hebron. They formed a dominant part of the population until they fell prey to the "sea peoples" who swarmed over the country in the twelfth century. About this same time the Hurrians, a non-Semitic people, speaking a language similar to Caucasian, migrated from around Arrapha, east of the Tigris. Through recent knowledge of Hurrian proper names, it is evident that they occupied, during the second millenium, wide regions of Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine. They are the "Horites" of Palestine. Though the Biblical accounts of the masoretic text seem to confine them to Edom, Jack thinks, with others, that we should read "Horite" instead of "Hivvite" in Gen. 34:2, 36:2,[1] Josh. 9:7, 11:19. The LXX has "Horite" in Gen. 34:2 and Josh. 9:7. This would make the "Horites" the dominant race in Shechem in patriarchal times. Jack speaks of them as one of the "important cultural races in Western Asia from 2000 to 1400 B.C."[2]

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[1] Cf. 36:20, which, though it refers to the same family is "Horite". Speiser, op. cit. p. 29.

[2] J. W. Jack, "Biblical Archaeology", Supplement to Peake's Commentary (1936). See also "Recent Biblical Archaeology", Expos. Times, 50, p. 277, where Jack writes as follows:

> "The Hurrians were a highland race from the Caucasus regions who made a powerful and widespread push southward into the Euphrates district (the fertile crescent of the Semites) about 2000 B.C. or perhaps earlier. They settled in large numbers in Mesopotamia, particularly in Nuzi (modern Yorghan Tepe) and Arrapha (modern Kirkûk) and formed the main population of the Mitanni nation (c. 1400 B.C.) in Aram-Naharaim (Egyptian

Barton places the Hyksos invasion 1800 to 1750 and identifies these men of "high Hittite culture" with the "Canaanites" of frequent Biblical mention.[1]

E. O. Forrer is interested in a Hittite tribe who entered Palestine in 1353 B.C., a people of the Gasgaean city of Kurustamma and presumptive subjects of the Hittite king Subbiluliuma. Their presence in the now Egyptian dominated territory of Palestine was somewhat of an embarassment to both monarchs, and in 1352 a treaty was concluded whereby the invaders (or wanderers) were permitted to settle in sparcely populated sections, founding several

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Naharina) in the region between the Tigris and the Euphrates. They spread westward into Palestine to such an extent that the Egyptians, beginning with the XVIII dynasty (c. 1580 B.C.) regularly called the land Hurù, and they were frequently mentioned in Biblical records under the name of Hori (cuniform Hurru). Discoveries are showing more and more that their influence on the Hebrews, through racial intermixture, social customs and other circumstances, must have been considerable. Hurrian tablets from Nuzi, numbering about 1100 and dating from about 1475 to 1350 B.C. continue to shed much light on the Patriarchal period and illustrate many obscure passages in Judges and Samuel."

[1] G.A. Barton, Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 299. Cf. Speiser, op.cit., p. 34 f.:"Hyksos" means simply "rulers of the foreign lands"; it may stand for Hurrian, Hittite, Amorite, and the like, not barring Habiru (which comes to designate a well-defined entity, recruited, however, from various ethnic groups) nomads wherever encountered. Chiera thinks their bands may have been recruited from among captives. Another theory makes them mercinaries, but Speiser thinks the "soldiers of fortune". (Might they not, perhaps have been wandering bands of traders? Such persons would have appreciated the possibilities of Palestine, and would have been more than likely to settle at Shechem, the crossroads of the land.)

villages. Of this tribe, he thinks were Abimelech and Uriah the Hittite. Forrer thinks these tribes took over the hill country of Judah and the cities of Beersheba, Hebron and Jerusalem.[1]

One wonders if the tribal reminiscence of the "assignment" of the highlands to these people might have inspired the later story of Joshua 17, where, according to the JE account,[2] Joshua suggests to the "numerous" Josephites that they clear themselves ground in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaim, in the highlands of Ephraim. Chronological accuracy was obviously not rated as important by ancients as it is by moderns, and without the convenience of reference libraries, which of us could keep his forefathers' achievements within the century?

B. Patriarchal period

1. General survey

Egyptian influence began to be felt in Palestine in the sixth dynasty,[3] but Egypt at this time was apparently

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[1] E. O. Forrer, "Hittites in Palestine", PEFQS (1937-38), p. 100: After the period of David and Solomon, the term "Hittite" was no longer used except of out-of-state Hittites, never as applying to a basic ethnic portion of the population. At this period the "conglomeration of races", the original "tribes", Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizaites, Hivvites, Jebusites and Girgashites, became one nation under the leadership of Israel.

[2] S.R. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 110.

[3] Barton, Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, c. 3

not intent on expansion but merely anxious to protect her own borders. More in the spirit of empire was the invasion of Sesostris III in the twlefth dynasty, whose inscription seems, so far, our first reference to Shechem in Egyptian records. Sesostris III claims to have advanced as far as Sekmem and conquered the land, but the people of that city joined forces with the "vile Retenu" to attack the Egyptian king's rear guard on the return trip, and make success of the expedition doubtful.[1] This verifies the idea of Shechem's occupation by a people with racial sympathies toward the east. But the meagerness of our records of these early times may predispose us to put unwarranted significance to the isolated material we have.

In the lists of conquered cities of Palestine which have come down to us from Thothmes III,. there is no mention of the city of Shechem. This may mean, of course, that the city retired within its walls and remained unconquered. It seems more likely, however, that we should couple the lack of any mention of Shechem with the fact that two place names are mentioned for which we have no identification, Jacob-el and Joseph-el.[2]

Now this checks, strangely, with the Babylonian records of Shamsu-iluna, Hammurabi's successor, which speak of a merchant Abraham, and also of Yagubilu (Jacob-el) and

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[1] Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 89; Barton, op.cit. p. 111.

[2] J.H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt I, p. 302 ff.

Yashubily (Joseph-el) who migrated to the coast. Yet here, again, one must allow room for coincidence, and the reconstruction suggested is of course purely speculative. We might suggest the possibility, however, that Hittite invasion from the north took over the site of the city of Shechem, which maintained its friendly contacts with peoples of similar race and speech, who migrated south-eastward. Among the group who went into Chaldea were certain traders, who made the journey to the coast.[1] One was named Abraham, and perhaps somewhat later there were two by the names of Jacob and Joseph, who became wealthy and famous in Shechem to the point where the city was often called by their names.

Olmstead's contention that Jacob-el and Jacob-baal as Shechemite names indicates that Jacob was a true divinity scarcely seems a necessary conclusion and at least raises the

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[1] A Babylonian record shows the frequency of such travel between Babylonia and Palestine at this period. A wagon is leased for a year, one condition being that it is not to be used for travel to the coast (Barton, op. cit. p. 299). C.H. Gordon, "Story of Jacob and Labon in the Light of the Nuzi Tablets", BASOR 66, p.25,f,states that a study of the patriarchal narratives, regardless of how late their adaptation may have been, reflects, like the Nuzi tablests, a background of northern Mesopotamia in the first half of the second millenium, B.C. Jack, op. cit. Expos. Times 50 p. 279, emphasizes the wide-spread trade and cultural relationships of patriarchal times. He says of Abraham:

> "At the time when this Patriarch and his Habiru clans were leaving Horan for Canaan, the world, as then known was closely united in merchandise, art and other ways. As much was being done by diplomacy as by conquest, and diplomace in those far-off days was already a fine art. Letters, courteous, tactful, but firm, passed from ruler to ruler over large stretches. Unfortunately the Biblical records give us no hint of all this and we have to fill in the background ourselves."

question whether the ruler took the name of his patron god, or whether, as in Egypt, the ruler became deified. The same argument hold for Joseph-el, who according to this argument, would also have had to be an ancient god.[1]

W. F. Albright comes to the conclusion that the Joseph cycle is "the syncresis of two separate mythic cycles, one grouped around the snactuary of the god of fertility, Joseph, at Shechem, and the other borrowed from similar Egyptian sources, preserved for us only in the Osiris and Bitis myths." Joseph was, he thinks, "primarily a god of animal fecundity, worshipped at Shechem first as a god of fertility and later as the eponymous ancestor of the including the neighboring districts, i.e., the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. The presence of at Shechem means that there was once an organized sanctuary and service of Joseph there." Those who would follow out this theory draw attention to the fact that the name Rachel means ewe, and Leah comes from a word meaning cow, and these were probably the totem animals of the tribes.[2]

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[1] Olmstead, History of Palestine and Syria, p. 106.

[2] W. F. Albright, "Historical and Mythical Elements in the Story of Joseph", JBL 37, p. 114 ff. See also Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel, p. 59, n. H. G. May, developing Albright's theory, "Evolution of the Joseph Story," AJSL 47, p. 83 ff., holds that Joseph was a fertility deity of Shechem (he increases) whose myth was that common to fertility religions of the east. It was early connected with the bull and it was probably in the name of this god that Hoshea made his covenant that established the northern confederacy (so T. Meek, here quoted). This bull cult spread to most of the northern sanctuaries and was bitterly attacked by the prophets. Cf. Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, ex.vol., p. 613.

T. H. Robinson draws attention to the fact that Isaac has practically nothing said about him that has not already been said concerning Abraham, except concerning his success in agriculture. Robinson's conclusion is that the two patriarchs represent two successive migrations from the same place, uniting in Palestine. The historicity of Jacob, he says, need not be questioned, but the twelve patriarchs may be gods, totem anscestors, or human ancestors, This putting of the historic before the legendary ancestor is rather startling.[1]

Out of this mass of witness and speculation, it is impossible to draw a definite picture. We must reserve judgment, re-forming our convictions continually to accord with new archeological evidence, as record after record comes to light. But one thing should certainly be evident: we cannot cram the history of the migrations of many restless people, covering a period of say 500 years, into the biographies of even three lifetimes, and have these biographies remain authentic for the individuals involved. There may have been -- the evidence tends to indicate that there were -- actual individuals by the names of the patriarchs.[2] It is probable that one or more of them migrated from the

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[1] Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel I, p. 57 f.

[2] E. A. Speiser, op. cit., p. 43, says:
"There is today no reason to doubt the general background of the Patriarchal narratives. In point of fact recent discoveries have greatly increased our respect for their essential accuracy. It is not a question of the historicity of the principal persons involved; what is of moment

east and came to Shechem, the cross-roads of Palestine, where they met with much success. But the stories that tradition built up around such a person as time went on, would not be his own stories, but stories concerning the immigrants of the period of which he was representative. It is to be expected, therefore, that there will be inconsistencies, duplicate narratives and much confusion. Such stories are neither biography nor history, and had at the start no sacred significance. Their present form grew naturally out of a combination of history and biography, mellowed and blended in racial memory and tempered by the aspirations and beliefs, prejudices and superstitions, loves, hates and growing ideals of the emerging nation. Undoubtedly much that took place in later times was transferred in the telling to an earlier period. Only as we really attain this viewpoint can we read our Bibles without at least subconscious reservations as to the honesty of the whole presentation.

In such materials it becomes evident that one must be prepared to go all the way with Biblical criticism or not to start it in the first place. Nowhere is the necessity for this critical viewpoint more evident than in dealing with the materials in regard to Shechem, for here, as we shall see, we have to allow not only for accidental and subconscious changes, but for deliberate ones inspired by the jealousy of a great rival.

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in this connection is the fact that lives like theirs, full of apparently insignificant incidents, can now be

2. Biblical notices

(a) Gen. 12:6

With this more or less objective background, let us turn now and examine the actual Biblical passages in which Shechem is mentioned. They are few, considering Shechem's importance, and most are from early sources. Let us consider first the J story of Abram's visit to Shechem as revealed in Gen. 12:6.

This account tells how Abram, at God's bidding, left his home, and with Sarai and Lot "travelled through the land as far as the sanctuary of Shechem at the terebinth of Moreh, the Canaanites being then in the land." Here the Lord appeared to Abram, promising the land to his descendents, and Abram built an altar to Yahweh. He continued from there to a place between Bether and Ai, where he built another altar and called upon the name of the Lord, before continuing his journey to the Negeb, and thence to Egypt.

At Shechem, then, through the theophany of the oracle-giving tree, whose powers are apparently already recognized by the inhabitants of the land, Abram receives the first intimation that this land is to be the goal of his journey, and he preceeds to take posession, in token of his belief in that promise, by erecting an altar.[1]

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duplicated or reconstructed, almost incident by incident, from a number of cuniform records dating from the first half of the second millenium."

[1] Skinner points out, Genesis, ICC, p. 246 ff., that

The story is obviously legendary.[1] To what extent Abraham is or is not historic, or to what extent his name is an eponym and the tale is of a tribal migration from Ur or elsewhere, or to what extent Abraham symbolizes not one migration but general tribal movements (in this and other similar passages) has already been sufficiently discussed.

At any rate, the purpose of the passage is neither historic nor geographic, but primarily etiological.

Gen. 33:18-20 (E) gives us the northern version of the founding of Israel's religion at Shechem. Now we find not Abraham, but Jacob there. He and Esau have parted company, and Jacob is camping before the city of Shechem. From the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, he buys the land on which he camps and there erects an altar to El-elohe-Israel, that is, El, god of Israel.[2]

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there is no record of actual sacrifice here, a point which is not necessarily significant, though it does seem to contrast with his "calling upon the name of the Lord" at Bethel. The point seems to be, here, as elsewhere under similar circumstances, to establish the legitimacy of the already existent sanctuary for Israel, by the story of the theophany. The , sacred place, is so used in Gen. 22:4, 28:11, 35:1; Ex. 3:5; I Sam. 7:16; Jer. 7:12. Shechem is the first and most northerly of the four sanctuaries connected with the name of Abraham, the others being Bethel, Hebron, Beersheba.

[1] The complete absence of any jealousy motif in these early J accounts in speaking of Shechem, is argument for an earlier date than is usually assigned to J, namely, before the split of the northern and southern kingdoms.

[2] Here the Israelites brought Joseph's bones for burial when they returned from captivity in Egypt, many centuries later, Josh 24:32. Abraham's burial ground, Gen.

Bnê Ḥămôr seems to have dominated the Shechem region at this time,[1] but Biblical records give us no clue as to its origin.[2]

The E author seems anxious to establish the suprem - ecy of El, the god of Israel, as the legitimate deity to be worshipped. But who are this El's rivals? Yahweh of the Southern Kingdom? And if so, which really had priority? Or is it El or Baal Berith of the city itself? Or even El of the pantheon of Megiddo, for instance?

It must be admitted that the two passages look very much like duplicate accounts. Further comparison of the Abraham with the Isaac-Jacob narratives shows, as Robinson has pointed out, practically parallel development.[3] But to give historic priority to Abraham because he is mentioned first in the Pentateuch, or because he is the hero of the J narratives, presumably written before the E cucle is unwarrented. If there were two such people, we have no way of determining which was first, but we do know that as folk-stories of the earliest migrations developed in the north,

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c. 23, which was also purchased. Is this an indication of early anscestor worship? Oesterley and Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 60.

[1] In Gen. 48:22, also E, Israel, about to die in Egypt, after blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, says to Joseph,"As the one above your brothers I hereby give you Shechem, which I captured from the Amorites with my sword and bow." This is irreconcilable with the above or with E in c. 34. It is probably E's dramatic sense getting the best of historic tradition. It makes Shechem the conscious objective of the exodus.

[2] Cf. Josh. 17:2

[3] Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel I, p. 57 ff.

around the name of Jacob, Shechem is the obvious center of activity -- the crossroads of Palestine. It must have been for Palestine very much what Kansas City was for the west in the days of our own migrations. The J writer, although writing from a time and place where traditions about Shechem were of no interest, and where Abraham and Hebron were the names to be glorified, still frankly admits Shechem was Abraham's first stop. This seems to have been generally accepted as fact. Of course the J writer, especially if he wrote 1000 B.C., may have concerned himself with establishing the sanctity of the altar at Shechem as a proper place to worship Yahweh, and so deliperately injected Abraham and his theophany into Shechem's history. On the other hand, Abraham was very likely less esential to Shechem's prestige, than Shechem was to his. It is quite conceivable that a theophany at Shechem was a necessary part of building up an eponynymous leader's reputation as a religious and national forefather, even in a cycle of stories centered at Hebron.

Abraham's theophany was from Yahweh, and to him he erected his altar, while Jacob erects his to El-elohe-Israel, El, god of Israel. Apparently the of Shechem was a "sacred place" regardless of tribal affiliations, a place of worship for all peoples, where any devotee might erect an altar to his god.[1]

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[1] Cf. I Kings 11:5 ff., re Solomon's various temples at Jerusalem.

(b) Gen. 34.

Our next reference to Shechem is in Gen. 34. The thing that always happens at the crossroads of a new country has happened here: a thriving, bustling city has grown up. We wish we knew who this Hamor was, who seems to have been the head man in the city. It was from him that Jacob bought the land outside the city which he and his family still occupy, though time has elapsed and Jacob's children have grown up and become somewhat unruly. The recurrence of this situation, first in the narrative as told by E, who should be our best authority on Shechem, and now in a composite narrative which seems to be assuming some degree of historicity, would suggest that the people later known as the Joseph tribe, the devotees of El-elohe-Israel, who later broke up into the smaller tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, never entered into the life of the city of Shechem itself, but formed a permanent settlement at some distance.[1]

The story is of Dinah, daughter of Leah and Jacob, who is ravished by Shechem, son of Hamor (here reported as a Hivvite, prince of the district). Shechem wishes to take the girl in marriage, and agrees wholeheartedly to the de-

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[1] R. Kittel, Geschichte des Volkes Israel, p. 265, protests the effort of many scholars to transfer this passage to the book of Judges, and holds the narrative comprehensible only if Shechem belonged to Jacob at an early date.

In regard to the tribe of Joseph splitting into smaller units rather than uniting from them, see Judges 8:1 ff., Josh. 18:2. Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 236.

mands of her kinsmen.

"Intermarry with us, giving us your daughters in marriage and marrying ours," says Hamor. "If you will make your home with us, the land will be at your disposal; settle down, engage in trade, and acquire property in it."

In other words, the city of Shechem approached its neighbor with propositions for an alliance, which proposition seems to have been at first favorably received. What regulations were originally imposed by the Jacobites, we do not know. The demand for circumcision of the inhabitants of Shechem is from the hand of a late P writer, and it is doubtful whether its use as evidence is permissible.

Negotiations seem to have been going along well when Dinah's hot-headed brothers Simeon and Levi made a treacherous attack, slaughtering the Shechemites and sacking the city. Jacob reproves them for getting them into trouble with the Perizzites and Canaanites, who will now probably combine against him.

It is discouraging to try to fathom the historicity behind the narrative, or the motive behind its redaction, for redaction certainly is present. The telling is in duplicate. According to one story, the matter seems a more or less personal affair between Shechem on the one hand and Simeon and levi on the other; while in the other narrative the tribes as a whole are more concerned. It is Hamor who speaks and proposes general intermarriage and commercial dealings between the two peoples, while the

finale is not the slaying of Shechem himself, but the general slaughter and sack of the town. There is considerable controversy as to whether the story is of an individual maiden, or whether Dinah represents a weak tribe in danger of absorption by Shechem[1] and whether the foolhardy tribes of Simeon and Levi were, as a matter of fact, not the victors, but extinguished in the encounter. Skinner thinks that 49:6-7, the mention of the two tribes in the blessing of Jacob, refers to this event, and that the original J narrative may have gone on to tell of retalliation against them by the Canaanites -- the real reason for the departure to Bethel.

Another viewpoint suggests that the story of Simeon and Levi is that of the abortive attempt of these clans to enter the land from the south, and that the narrative was later transferred to Shechem because of similarities to the story of Abimelech.[2]

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[1] Skinner, Genesis, ICC, p. 414

[2] Ibid, p.421
There is certainly no continuity between this and the next J mention of Shechem in 37:12. In the latter passage we find Jacob, after all these experiences and his trek to Bethel, living at Hebron and pasturing his flocks at Shechem. This is probably in the continuity of the main J narrative. J would have to adopt Jacob at Hebron to give background to the new Joseph cycle, which was the common literary child of the Hebrew people as such.
Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel, p. 60: Gen. 49:5-7 may be later history concerning Simeon and Levi thrown back to the patriarchal age.
H.G. May, "Evolution of the Joseph Story", AJSL 47, p. 93, suggests that the Joseph story got its final form at Hebron. He says:
"The keynote of the history of Judah was the sojourn in Egypt, the wanderings in the wilderness and the entrance

Certainly the story as we have it implies the capture of the city by the Israelites, and this is in line with 48:22.

The analysis of sources, which could be expected to throw some light on the subject, is very confused, and seems to confound it still further.

Driver assigns the passage to J and P, with the possibility that P is based upon an earlier E source.[1] But Skinner points to considerable difficulty with this analysis, though accepting it in the main. In the source usually

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into Canaan from the south. If the north was to have a cultural unity with Judah, it must also have a part in that history. Such a tradition could be developed in Israel only through using an already existing Israelitish tradition and connecting it with the Judean story of the sojourn in Egypt. At Shechem was this delightful story of Joseph. It was a popular story, for it was the basis of the New Year's liturgy. It was grossly baalistic and polytheistic, but the religious genius of the Levites could transform this. Since it included reference to most of the Hebrew tribes, it was especially adaptable for their purpose."

Onto this liturgy then, May thinks, was grafted the story of Judah's own Egyptian experiences, together with certain Egyptian tales such as that of Janhamu, Baba, or the Two Brothers.

This is a very appealing theory, but it still leaves the question wide open as to why E always seems our best authority on things Egyptian. Is it perhaps as a background for Joseph, the national hero of Solomon's time, that the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob geneology may have developed? If both patriarchal and invasion narratives are telescoped into a few years, instead of a few centuries apiece, it would naturally leave a gap, which might have been filled in later by this consciously created masterpiece of the sanctuary story tellers. At any rate, whether Jacob's descendents during this period were in Egypt or near-by Bethel, is one thing we do not have to consider for the history of Shechem.

[1]Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 17.

ascribed to J, the "Israel" of J is "Jacob", but this would be an almost necessary change for the editor to make in such a composite account as this, particularly in view of chapter 35. Skinner objects, too, to the fact that Jacob's feeding his flocks west of the Jordan[1] is no logical sequal to this. If chapter 34 is regadred as a redacted JE narrative, then why, asks Skinner, is only E edited. This would be quite easily explained in the light of later rivalries. The southern priest might well wish to edit the Northern Kingdom's own account of the history of the Northern kingdom's holy city!

It is Eduard Meyer's contention that chapter 34 is an example of a sporadic and divergent tradition occurring here and there through the Pentateuch, which ignores the exodus and the sojourn in Egypt and traces the conquest and division of the land directly to Jacob and his sons. Of this tradition he believes one recension was the work of the Yahwists, and another current with the Elohists, but that neither is part of our J and E narratives. Insertion here was an "afterthought."[2]

Now Shechem would seem a logical place to locate the source of such a narrative as the original tradition.

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[1]Gen. 37:12 ff.

[2]Quoted, Skinner, Genesis, ICC, p. 417 ff., which see for Meyer's analysis.

This speculation is borne out by the frequency with which, as will be noted in the following references, critical problems present themselves in connection with the Shechem stories. We can better consider the presence of such a "Shechem tradition" in the Pentateuch after we have gone through the rest of the references.

After the foregoing events, the narrative takes up the E strand. God tells Jacob to go to Bethel, and there erect an altar to God (El), who had appeared to him when he fled from Esau. In preparation for this transfer of abode, there is a general cleansing, and the foreign gods of his family are buried at the foot of the teribinth at Shechem. It is now that Jacob's name is changed to Israel.

This passage is definitely assigned to E. The verse regarding the change of Jacob's name to Israel is, as we might expect, P, and would seem to indicate that the Priestly writer put considerable significance on the preceding story of Jacob's removal to Bethel.

The burial of the foreign gods under the terebinth at Shechem, together with the ear rings, which Skinner thinks were originally amulets of a "false religion", signify that the move was in the nature of a religious protest, rather than the result of such events as are described or implied in the preceding chapter. Was it migratory religion's protest against an agricultural faith, or to what

extent, if any, was a distant ideal of monotheism protesting against synchronism with a naturalistic religion?[1] Or was this a general reform movement involving the separation of church (as represented in the near future by Bethel) and state (represented by Shechem, which certainly assumed political leadership). Joshua uses the same command to "put away the foreign gods which are in your midst" at the assembly referred to in Josh. 24:23 (E), and which Skinner calls the "great national renunciation of idols at Shechem."[2] Quite possibly, it seems to me, Gen. 35:1-8 is an etiological reflection from Bethel of what happened at Shechem in Joshua's time.

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[1] Du Bose thinks the monotheism of the invading patriarchs was deteriorating at Shechem, and that this move was a cleansing of the religion of Israel from the influences of Baal. It is to be noted, however, that in going to Bethel, Jacob sought out another "sacred place" with a terebinth near-by, which would stand for a naturalistic religion. Moreover, if Rachael's gods did represent not so much religion as the family inheritance, as the Nuzi tablets suggest, then their burial at Shechem may merely represent the Joseph clan's burning their bridges -- severing former ties-- and making a fresh start in Palestine.

[2] Peake, Commentary, in loc.

Oesterley and Robinson, Hebrew Religion, p. 23, say: "Jacob's action in burying these idols must be understood as meaning that, since he had accepted Elohim as his god, and thereby repudiated these other gods, the ill will of these latter had to be provided against; there was no more efficacious way of achieving this than that of burying them under the tree sanctuary of his god, because there they would be under the control of a more powerful spirit. . . It clearly implies that the terebinth was an abode of the deity, and thus it offers a clear indication of earlier animistic belief. There is an evident connection between this passage and Josh. 24:26-27, for it is under this terebinth that Joshua sets up a great stone 'as witness lest the people deny God'."

This seems to me to identify Elohim too closely with the

We know something of the city of this period and later, and of the worship there, from the findings of the archeologists. The city was surrounded by an outer and an inner wall. The space between the two walls was packed with earth. Huge stones, the largest found so used in Palestine, had been placed for the outer wall, and at the top it had been heighthened by an additional wall of mud-brick. The complete wall was sixty-five feet high and fifty feet thick. Within the walls was a fort, of earlier date, with a sloping rampart of packed earth. The north and south walls had great gates. Approach from the south was by a wide ramp, so place that the unprotected right side of the attacking army would be exposed to the defenders on the walls. The ramp leads up from the valley fifteen feet below. Four towers, enclosing an open square, protected the gate.[1] Welter thinks this unified system of fortification dates from 1500 B.C.[2]

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animistic spirit of the tree itself. After all, Yahweh had an altar here, too, and Yahweh was certainly a migratory god. No one could have accused him of inhabiting a tree. It is rather that the tree marked a sacred spot, ,where any primitive god might be expected to make known his will.

[1] Millar Burrows, "Palestine and Syrian Archeology in 1931", BASOR 45, p. 23.
Albright, speaking of excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim, BASOR 47, p. 8, describes a ramp of beaten earth with a retaining wall on the side of that city. He thinks it dates from the Hyksos eruption in the middle of the eighteenth century, and speaks of it as similar to Qatna, Hazor and Shechem, which seem contemporary with el Mishrifeh in Syria and Tell el-yahudiyeh in Egypt.

[2] Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 398, says occupation of the site began in E.B.A.; the city was founded and fortified in M.B.A. I, soon after 2000 B.C.

The enclosed area is one of the largest walled cities so far discovered.[1] It is Hyksos in character, but whether this implies conquest of the city by a late Hyksos invasion, which took it over and fortified it, or whether early Hittite occupants welcomed newcomers who gradually built up the city's defenses, would be difficult to say. They were in existence till Abimelech's time.

Sellin's description of the temple within the city walls reports three temples, built one above the other. The shrine of the second temple dates back to the Egyptian period. Under its altar was an altar base of mud bricks, 23 x 17 feet, by ten inches high. Under the pedestal of a god's statue was a beehive pit plastered with clay. A foundation deposit was filled with animal bones and potsherds. The temple floor and entrance sill were of large and small stones, closely packed.[2]

Welter reports that at the foot of Mt. Gerizim was discovered a temple to Baal Berith, with Canaanite cult objects from the L.B.A. In a small shrine outside the temple, was a Canaanite fetish stone unique of its kind in Palestine, presumably also from this period.[3]

Jack describes the Shechem temple as from 1600 B.C.

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[1] Illustrated London News, June 18, 1932.

[2] ZDPV 49, p. 313; 50, p. 207

[3] Illustrated London News, June 18, 1932.

and as to a large extent an adaptation of the ancient outdoor high-place, for it consisted of nine rooms surrounding a large central unroofed court. "It was only after this time that worshippers in Palestine, influenced by the great neighboring cultures, especially those of Egypt and Mesopotamia, began to erect suitable structures for religious services."[1]

Albright says the most interesting discovery in the city was a temple of the late Canaanite period in the Millo, believed to represent the temple of Baal-berith of Judges 8,9, destroyed by Abimelech about 1100 B.C.[2]

Julian Obermann describes a fragment from a limestone plaque, possibly from as early as the sixteenth century. The plaque was of a person, human or divine is impossible to say, and the inscription, "of wind, water, light" is reminiscent of primitive religion, and in particular of the spirit of Elohim, brooding on the face of the waters, calling forth light. Linquistically, Obermann finds the inscription a "systematic consolidation of the North Semitic alphabet, differing from that of Phoenecia as well as that of Lachish, and standing, in some way, particularly close to the 'Cadmean' alphabet received by the Greeks."[3]

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[1] Jack, "Recent Biblical Archaeology", Expos. Times 49, p. 558.

[2] Albright, Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 56.

[3] Julian Obermann, "Wind, Water and Light in an Archaic Inscription from Shechem", JBL 57, p. 57.

The Amarna letters throw some light on the city's history, but their interpretation again leaves much room for controversy. The letter of Abd-Khipa of Jerusalem to "the Pharaoh",[1] reports that "Labaya and the land of Shechem have given all to the Habiru."[2] But who is this Labaya? Some have conjectured that he was a bandit chief, making his headquarters as Shechem. Others say he was the conquerer of the territory from Esdraelon to Gezer, and that he ceded to the Habiru the land of Shechem, perhaps as their share of the spoils for helping him conquer this part of Palestine. Garstang, placing the date of Joshua so early that it overlaps the Amarna period, thinks the terrified Jerusalem official who wrote the letter, failed to distinguish between a Hebrew-Habiru invasion from the north and a Hebrew-Israelite entry from the east, and that the event referred to was the same by which Joshua is reported to have settled, by treaty, at Shechem, on his entry into Palestine.[3]

The argument that because it is not in the list of 118 cities of Palestine captured by Thutmosis III, it must have become a fortress town after 1479-47[4] is hardly valid:

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[1] Kn. 289

[2] Ill. London News, June 18, 1932.

[3] Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 255.

[4] Ill.London News, June 18, 1932.

we have spoken of the possibility of its being referred to as Joseph-el in that list.

We get rather the picture of a proud, highly-fortified but isolated city, almost feudal in its organization. Few other bronze age records have been found in the surrounding highlands.[1] What towns there were must have been for the most part small unfortified villages. Dotham, its nearest great neighbor, chose to cast her fortunes with the plain of Esdraelon. The early history of Shiloh, which may have been under the influence of Shechem at this time, is still obscure. It is likely that the J account of the league headed by Jerusalem against the Hivvite-Israelite alliance,[2] and the reference to the domination of Hazor,[3] and a possible leage of Esdraelon and the coastal plain cities,[4] all refer to this period, though the Biblical accounts imply later. But none of these alliances seem to have involved Shechem. There is no record of her offering resistance to either Egypt, the Habiru or the Israelites[5] (if the latter two may be distinguished).[6]

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[1] Cf. Josh. 17:1-18 (J)

[2] Josh.10:3,5 (J)

[3] Josh. 11:10 (D); cf. Josh. 11:2,3 (D)

[4] Josh. 11:2,3 (D)

[5] Garstang, Heritage of Solomon, p. 100

[6] The one exception is the incident cited from the XII dynasty, when the Shechemites joined with Retenu to bedevil the rear guard of the returning Egyptian army. Peet, Stela of Sebek-Khu, ll. i,2. Quoted, Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p 79.

Nor is there any record of her response to the Philistine invasion which made Palestine "the scene of a struggle between the Aegean and Egyptian civilizations with a slight mingling of Mesopotamian influence, in which the local tribes took a merely passive interest", making no contribution whatever to its development.[1]

C. Period of the invasion

1. General survey

Yet with the "invasion", Shechem assumes with startling suddenness her role of national and religious leadership. It is to Shechem, the ancient crossroads city, that these new tribes, whatever their origin, go at once upon entering the land. It is here that they are pictured as finding a welcome and reorganizing their codes of conduct, better to conform with the different conditions in the new land. Here in Shechem, which has shunned alliances, are formed the federations and covenants which are to prove the basis of the Hebrew nation and the religion of Israel.

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[1]The Merneptah stele (1223 B.C.) listing victories over Canaan, Askalon, Gezer, Yenoam, Israel and Southern Palestine, and claiming

"All lands are united, they are pacified,
Everyone that is turbulent is bound by king Merneptah",

may commemorate an Egyptian retaliation against Phoenecian aggression. If "Israel" means the central country around Shechem, as might be suspected from its place on the list, the city itself was certainly not razed and we wonder at the complete destruction implied in the report, "Israel is desolate; her seed is not." Quite possibly Israel, while flourishing in the central highlands had not taken the city of Shechem, nor did Egypt. See Breasted, Ancient Records III, p. 617 f.; also Macalister, The Philistines, passim.

Before turning to the Biblical passages in regard to this period, let us pause for a general summary of conditions in Palestine at the time of the "invasion", and a word as to our modern understanding of that term. Perhaps what we can say of the period with any degree of assurance is as well summed up by T. Meek as by anyone:

> "The invaders were not an ethnic unit, but a composite group, perhaps more Aramean than anything else . . . The Old Testament represents them as invading the land loosely organized as allied tribes. Their common cause against a common foe tended to unite them more closely and in the due course of time a confederacy or amphictyone of some of the tribes (probably the Joseph tribes at first) was organized by Joshua as Shechem near Mt. Gerizim. Here a covenant was made, a simple code of laws promulgated, and a loosely organized state or amphictyone established, modeled in some respects after the pattern of the Canaanite state and incorporating in it some Canaanite civil and ritual law. In this northern confederacy we have what is later to be known as Israel. Numerous passages in the Old Testament show that Shechem was intimately associated with covenant making and law giving and was the political and religious center of the north, even as it is for the Samaritans down to the present day. . . . It is not surprising to find scholars suggesting that Shechem was the original home of the Hebrew Torah as against Sinai-Horeb or Kadesh, in that the Shechem story is manifestly much the earlier." [1]

The status of the southern tradition and the probability that Judah and especially Levi were in Egypt is beyond the scope of this paper. We will presume, therefore, for the sake of discussion, that the Shechem tradition is the original and authentic one, and try to see how our Biblical materials stand up in proof of such a pre-supposition.

Again, we have no way of proving that the Joseph tribes were in Egypt. Many things can happen to a tradi-

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[1] T. Meek, Hebrew Origins, p. 25 f.

tion in five hundred years' telling. Let us consider just two of the factors which might have entered into the story in its final form.

One was the custom of the Pharaohs, during the period of Egypt's dominance in Palestine, of taking youths from the land, especially the sons of conquered kings and chieftains, to Egypt to be raised and educated. When they returned to their homes, they were supposed to exert pro-Egyptian influence.[1] How long this custom continued we do not know. But we do know that some two hundred years before the story of the exile was probably written, by E, Jeroboam, who must have been a great heroic figure in the Northern Kingdom, had been in Egypt and had returned to save his people from tyranny and establish the nation of Israel. How easily the general idea of a trip to Egypt might have become transferred to another ancient story of the advent of a tribe from the east under the spectacular and heroic figure of Joshua.

In the second place, there is the possibility that these early stories were tempered by the prevalence of the idea of exile as a purgative and regenerative process in the naturalistic myths of Semites and others. Isis went to a foreign land in search of Osiris. Proserpine and Tammuz go away in order to restore the fruitfulness of the earth. In many primitive tribes today, the boy reaching

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[1]Breasted, History of the Ancient Egyptians, p.223 ff.

puberity must go into seclusion alone, at some distance from the tribe, for several days, returning to a feast in celebration of his adulthood.

But more disconcerting than such speculation is the following quotation from Godfrey Higgins' Anacalypsis:

> "We have, as observed by Nimrod, the exodus, or going out of all nations -- probably the first migration of the tribe. We have this part of the mythos clearly in north India, south India, Syria, Babylon, Troy, Rome and in Mexico." [1]

Higgins' point seems to be, so far as the Jewish exodus story is concerned, that it is the accomodation of a myth, common to primitive people, as background and justification for the passover, or the spring festival of Palestine.

Intriguing as such problems become, and desirable as it is to hold the most radical and divergent possibilities tentatively in mind, we cannot stop in our history of Shechem to solve the whole problem of the exodus.. And if we discredit the historicity of the exodus for the northern tribes completely, it only makes the historicity of Joshua, as the hero-leader of one or a group of the incoming tribes of Habiru more compelling, by removing a "motive" for telling the story.[2]

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[1] Godfrey Higgins, Anacalypsis II, p. 24.

[2] G.A. Barton, "The Habiru of the El-Amarna Tablets and the Hebrew Conquest of Palestine", JBL 48, p. 144 f.: Confirming a view previously suggested by him and followed by Steuernagel, Barton cites the Abdi-Hepa letters as evidence that the earlier invasion by the Leah tribes was confused with a later invasion of the Joseph tribes from Egypt under Joshua. Abdi-Hepa, he claims, says not that Shechem

2. Biblical notices

(a) Josh. 24:1-15

Let us therefore presume that Joshua and his followers came to Shechem about the thirteenth or fourteenth century, B.C. E, in spite of much editing, is still our best source for Shechem.. E's story is reported to us Josh. 24:1-15.

But this is not the graphic, interewting account we would have hoped for from the author of the Joseph stories, but for the most part a speech -- Joshua's last speech, delivered to "all the tribes of Israel, assembled at Shechem."[1]

Probably the first thing to be considered is what E means by "Israel". As we have seen, the Egyptians may have used the term to designate the tribes of the central highlands in the immediate neighborhood of Shechem. On the other hand, E would have used it, as Amos did, to specify the Northern Kingdom.[2] It was probably a rather spontaneous group, responding to the call of a natural

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was conquered, but that conquest was imminent, and that this might have referred to the Simeon-Levi repulse. The Habiru attempt to conquer central Palestine having failed, left the field open for Joshua, who confined himself to this part of the country.

[1]LXX has Shiloh

[2]But note that Josh. 24:11b, 13, making Joshua's conquest seem far more extensive and formidible are from D.

leader and the obvious need of some sort of organization and cooperation if they were to get along together in the land. Some of them had come from the north and east. These people would probably have language and cultural difficulties in Palestine, where the civilization was now predominantly Egyptian. Yet Shechem had, as we have seen, maintained a degree of autonomy and probably, behind its great walls, something of its Hittite culture. It was, more than ever, the natural place for the newcomers to congregate. But here, also, was the logical place to which the Israelites who had been in Egypt (we will presume, with E, that the Joseph clans were there)[1] would return. Of this Egyptian contingent Joshua seems to have been the leader. It is possible that he already had about him a small federation which had joined forces at Jericho, and that the strength of their numbers was sufficient to induce others to join. Perhaps the most likely supposition is that Joshua did not belong to the group returning from Egypt, but that his clan joined their contingent at Jericho, and that Joshua threw his lot, and that of the group he represented, in with theirs. He was, perhaps, particularly impressed with their god, and his accomplishments.

Now if this group were to pool their interests and become a unity, naturally the first thing they must do was to set up for themselves a national god. Joshua was

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[1]Josh. 24:4 ff.

fair in the matter -- he seems to have put it to a vote:

> "If you find it obnoxious to serve the Lord, choose today whom you will serve, either the gods whom your fathers served who are beyond the river, or the god of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh."

To the Elohist, writing centuries later, it seems that the people were making the one reasonable choice: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve alien gods!" But this E tradition makes the choice at Shechem even more of a free will decision than can be read into J's account of the Sinai assembly, even by Karl Budde.[1] The people have seen what the Lord can do. But there is, as reported by E, no magic, no exaggerated promises. Joshua, on the contrary, warns them of the ethical obligations they are undertaining:

> "You may not serve the Lord and foreign gods as well; for being a holy god and a jealous god, he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and do evil to you, and annihilate you, after having done you good."

It is little wonder that a religion with that sort of a tradition back of it, would, in the days when its people had lapsed into the forgetfulness that comes with national aggranzizement and economic luxury, produce the prophets to call it again to the service of the one God.[2]

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[1] Religion of Israel to the Exile, c. 1-3

[2] Cf. D's stilted redaction in c. 23

(b) Josh. 24:25, 8:30-32, Deut. 11:26 ff., 27:12 ff.

The second thing a group so pooling their interests would be interested in would be some sort of a code of laws by which to live, and this Joshua supplied:

> "Joshua made a covenant with the people that day; he made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem, and Joshua wrote these regulations in the book of the law of God." [1]

Now what constituted this book of the law of God is one of the most baffling of the important critical problems of the Old Testament. It is tempting to dispose of it, with Peake and others, by saying that if there had been such a book, the stone, as witness, would have been unnecessary. The book, itself would have been a better witness. The phrase is probably an insertion, Peake thinks, and he makes no suggestion as to the nature of the law promulgated.[2]

One suggestion, in line with Welch's belief in the Mosaic origin of Deuteronomy, is that this was the code referred to here.[3] If either Deuteronomy or its prototype was the basis of the law here given, we should certainly attend to the Deuteronomic passages, Deut. 11:26 ff., 27:12 ff. or Josh. 8:30 ff. It will be as well to consider them all

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[1] Josh. 24:25 f.

[2] Peake, Commentary, p. 245.

[3] A. Welch, Code of Deuteronomy. J. Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, p. 91, refers to Deut. 12-26 as the "first Hebrew Bible." Cf. "Code of Deuteronomy", symposium by Bewer, Paton and Dahl, JBL 1928, p. 305-79.

together, bearing in mind at the same time such passages as Deut. 12:6, where the injunction against idolatry and the insistence on one legitimate place of worship only, carefully avoids mention of the name of the place so chosen. The explanation that the name of Jerusalem is not given because the Hebrews could not have known it as yet, does not seem sufficient. In other cases, the later writers had no scruples against anticipating names not as yet revealed.

Deut. 11:26 ff. is probably part of a second introduction to Deut. 12-26, which was the original book, whatever that may mean. It speaks of the "blessing and the curse" to be put on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal as symbolic of the right and wrong moral choices which will be set before the newcomers in their promised land.

Deut. 27:12 ff. gives details as to the ceremonial carrying out of the blessing and the curse, presupposing the instructions credited to Moses in 11:26 ff.[1]

Josh. 8:30-32 relates how

> "Joshua built an altar to the Lord, the God of Israel, on Mt. Gerizim, as Moses, the servant of the Lord had commanded the Israelites, an altar of undressed stones, on which no iron tool had been used, as it is written in the law book of Moses. Burnt-offerings to the Lord were made on it, and thank-offerings were sacrificed. Then he wrote there on the stones a copy of the law of Moses which he had written for the Israelites."

The story continues as to how the elders, officials and judges took their stands beside the ark, opposite the

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[1] Driver, Deuteronomy, ICC, p. 298.

Levitical priests, resident aliens as well as native born lining up on Gerizim and Ebal for the blessing and the curse.

None of the passages throw any real light on the nature or origin of Deuteronomy, or tell us whether it might be the Book of the Law of God promulgated at Shechem. But if our conception of the conditions under which these laws were adopted by the people has any justification, then to suggest that Deut. 12-26 was the book referred to would be to accuse the Lord of a high degree of impracticality, and not much understanding of the needs of his people. The "resident alien" can scarcely have been an immediate problem and we doubt if the migrants would have listened to cultic regulations in regard to sacrifice till their first crops were in.

One matter, however, is disconcerting. If Deuteronomy is a seventh century product of Jerusalem, why should all this emphasis be put on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal at the very time when the object was to unify worship at Jerusalem, and when no prophet would so much as mention Shechem or her holy mountain? One suggestion that presents itself is that Deuteronomy was a northern document, possibly originally specifying Shechem as the one place of worship. It may originally have been an attempt to bring the southern Hebrews "into the fold" and unify worship at Shechem.[1]

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[1] 17:24 f. suggest it might be a product of Jeroboam's anti-Solomon activity. Solomon was no strict Yahwist, and the prophetic voice in the south probably supported the claims of Mt. Gerizim.

It seems very likely that there was a movement for reconcilliation between the north and the south after the fall of Israel, and that Deuteronomy was the basis of negotiations. Possibly the original plan was to have Jerusalem as the political, and Shechem as the religious center, but the lying pens of the Jerusalem priests and scribes wrought falsely and treacherously in the matter, demanding everything for Jerusalem, so that the movement for reconcilliation came to nought. But we will come to this again.

Two other possibilities present themselves.

Probably the most widely accepted belief is that the code adopted at Shechem was the "covenant code", which in the E document was preceeded by Josh. 24.[1]

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[1] T. Meek, Hebrew Origins, p. 25 ff.
Holzinger, Staerk, Stuernagel, Luckenbill and Waterman think the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 20:22-23:19) in whole or in part, originally stood in Josh. 24, constituting the "Book of the Laws of God" mentioned in v. 26. Duplicate narratives concerning the giving of the Law in the Old Testament "would seem to be the result of a prejudiced Judean interpretation of the events, becuase it is of course natural that the Judeans would not take kindly to Israelite precedence in lawgiving." (Meek) Demonstrable instances of actual altering of the text of existing documents is to be found in Deut. 11:29 f., 27:4, Josh.8:30. The first is the gloss already referred to locating Gerizim near Jericho; in the other two, Ebal is substituted for Gerizim. The fact that J probably took written form first does not affect this argument. J was an altering of the E tradition, which tradition was later written as it had existed through the centuries. Because the J document is earlier is no reason to say that its sources in tradition go further into antiquity or are more reliable than E's, especially as regards events in the Northern Kingdom.

E does not, apparently, deny the Sinai tradition any more than the trek to Egypt, for the Israelite tribes. If we were to search through the Bible for the kind of legislation which would most likely fill the needs of a nomad people coming into an agricultural community, somewhat more advanced than themselves in culture, and preparing to settle there, we would probably say that the nucleus of this code was the most likely.[1] Where the code comes from is another question. Arguments as to whether Moses wrote the book or read out of the book, or whether Joshua actually inscribed the law on the plastered altar, and if so, just how much of the law was so recorded, are unwarrented. In the first place this using of isolated words, in reports written centuries later without any intention of them being so used as historic proof, is quite unfair. In the second

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[1]But see contra J. Morgenstern, Book of the Covenant, holding the nucleus of the book of the covenant is from the reign of Asa (I Kings 15:9-15) while 20:23-26 and 23:10-19, which is dependent on 34:14-26, came into existence 842 B.C. and represents the cultic manifesto of the prophetic party of that year, in northern Israel, to which other material was subsequently added.

But R.H. Pfeiffer says Exodus 34 is a post-Deuteronomic copy of 22:28-29, 23:10-14, and that the nucleus of the book of the covenant is a Canaanite decalogue from 1200 (23:12-19,22, 29b-30) which had passed through several Israelite editions, plus the equally old 21:2-22:17.

P. Volz, Mose und sein Werk (2 ed., 1932) ascribes the decalogue of chapter 20 to Moses, while Meinhold, Der Dekolog, places it in the sixth century. Mowinckel thinks it is temple ritual of the seventh century or later. Jepsen thinks the Book of the Covenant a priestly redaction from the period of Judges, using various codes, some of which go back to pre-Mosaic mishpatim. (From Eissfeldt, in Record and Revelation, p. 88 f.)

place, such arguments are too frequently used by those who nominally accept without question the documentary theory, but cannot quite bring themselves to make it a working basis of Biblical interpretation. It would be well if we could inject a greater degree of empathy into our interpretation, instead of this literalistic bias.

When we ask ourselves where the most likely source of the nucleus of such a code as we are discussing is to be found, we must say, in the land which the people were to occupy. The thing of primary importance would be to be able to "get along" together in their new home, and it could reasonably be supposed that the "natives" could give valuable information on that score. The framework[1] may, of course, have been supplied by Joshua's genius and religious fervor. On the other hand, there is the possibility, and a very appealing one, that the Israelites who remained in the land -- not the city -- of Shechem[2] since patriarchal days, had actually retained certain pentads of former times. There is no necessity for trying to fit the whole code as it now stands into the scheme, yet it does seem likely that some

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[1] 20:23-26, 22:18-31, 23:1-19 and perhaps 21:12-17. Peake, Commentary, p. 184.

[2] There seems to be no tradition of the city of Shechem being conquered by the invaders.. The JE tradition (Josh. 17:15 ff.) where Joshua "assigns" the highlands to Ephraim and Manasseh to conquer for themselves certainly implies settlement of the clans there without opposition, but neither here nor in D's list of conquered cities (Josh. 12:2) is Shechem mentioned. Either Shechem remained impregnable or, more likely, definitely welcomed these newcomers as anti-Egyptians.

agreement of major importance and great religious significance took place in the highlands of Ephraim on the shoulder of the sacred Mt. Gerizim, which welded together the conglomerate people of that section by concretizing in record and ceremony, certain common religious objectives and social standards of conduct.[1] In the minds of many scholars, Shechem stands for compromise of religious integrity. Its code is contrasted with the more rigid, puritanical Sinai tradition. But there is no reason to think less of a religion because it seeks to work in harmony with God's laws of nature, and inspires people to try to get along together.

3. Samaritan claims

But there is still another suggestion which we must discuss in regard to the possible nature of the legislation adopted at Shechem, and that is the belief of the Samaritan sect who still dwell in the city, that it was the ten Samaritan commandments or perhaps even the Samaritan Pentateuch

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[1] W. C. Graham and H.G. May, Culture and Conscience, p. 306, concerning the covenant code's prototype in the code Hammurabi say: This code preserves a blurred record of the earliest known social legislation in Canaan. Its original was known in Shechem prior to the Hebrew entry into the country under Joshua. Josh. 24 which represents Joshua as making a covenant with the people at Shechem, reflects the adoption of this feature of the reigning culture by the earliest "Hebrews". The fact that there was a temple of Baal Berith at Shechem echoes the same circumstances. Olmstead (HPS p. 107) and others are therefore correct in ascribing the Palestinian origin of the code to the Canaanite civilization.

[2] Montgomery, The Samaritans, p. 29.

itself. Their story warrants respectful hearing, if for no other reason, because they do undoubtedly posess the oldest Pentateuch in the world, written in language similar to the Lachish letters of the seventh century.[1]

This manuscript claims to have been written by the great grandson of Aaron. This note appears between the columns of Deut. 5:6 ff:

> "I, Abishua, son of Phineas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, may Yahweh's favor and glory be theirs, wrote the holy book in the gate of the tabernacle on Mt. Gerizim in the thirteenth year after the Israelites ruled the land of Canaan in its borders round about. I make known Yahweh." [2]

The Samaritans take the claim seriously.[3]

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[1] C. Marston, "Lachish Letters", Expos. Times 46, p. 502.

[2] J. A. Montgomery, The Samaritans, p. 286:
"The possession by the Samaritans of the law of Moses is throughout assumed and acknowledged by the Talmud and early Jewish writers, although these authorities claimed that the Samaritan law contained forgeries . . . The patristic writers likewise had cognizance of the Samaritan text, and the early Christain critics from Origin down make ~~make~~ frequent reference to it, using it without prejudice for the Jewish text, the latest Greek reference to it being found in George Syncellus (c. 800 A.D.). Then, with the decay of learning, all remembrance of the Samaritan Pentateuch faded away, the Jews, who could best have preserved the tradition, being doubtless glad to ignore it."
It was rediscovered early in the seventeenth century, and gave a tremendous impetus to textual criticism.

[3] We need not concur in the Samaritan credulity, but Montgomery, op. cit., p. 289, certainly displays remarkable shallowness when he states dogmatically that "apart from the few falsifications inserted by the Samaritans, there are no material differences, such, for instance, as would give the historian a different view of the age to which the composition belongs, or of the history which it relates; "the variations will never be more than of interest

They believe that the Pentateuch as it now stands was actually written by the hand of God, that Moses transcribed it, and handed it over to the priests and elders to be kept by the side of the ark of the covenant and to be read periodically to the people. Tradition insists that the altar of stones mentioned in Deuteronomy was erected by Joshua on Mt. Gerizim (Beth-el), plastered, and inscribed with the "words" or ten commandments, the inscription being a perfect copy from the original scroll. Joshua was assisted in this by the high priest Eleazar, and the priestly rule so established has, with certain vicissitudes, lasted down to the present day. The Samaritans claim to be both the original recipients of the law and its most zealous observers. Not a word must be changed. This may be a case of over-protesting. J.M.P. Smith is willing to concede their point, in his American translation, that the Jerusalem Jews were the ones who tampered with Deuteronomy, thereby making Ebal rather than Gerizim the sacred mountain. But he has not gone so far as to admit that the Samaritans were also right in the text of the ten commandments. Their version makes the first and the second commandment one, which is logical enough, and this leaves the tenth commandment an instruction that Mt. Gerizim is to be the seat of worship in the promised

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to the textual scholar, illustrative to him of the origin and process of various text-traditions." But the "few falsifications" may not be on the part of the Samaritans. And the spirit of jealousy which prompted them may color much of the Old Testament we know.

land.[1]

There is no need to concede the divine or even the Mosaic or Joshuaic origin of the Pentateuch or even of the covenant code in its present form, in considering this as the original Hebrew form of the commandments. It is hard for us to conceive of a time when they were not supremely sacred, yet such a time there undoubtedly was. And even when they had achieved considerable venerability they might still have been changed in the interests of religious reform, say by the Deuteronomic party of Jerusalem. It is my belief that something of this sort is what really did happen, but we will go into the matter further when we reach the seventh century, B.C. in Shechem's history.

Just now we must consider the earliest forewarnings of the Hebrew monarchy, as reported having taken place at Shechem.

D. The early monarchy

1. Gideon

The story of Gideon can certainly not be omitted from the history of Shechem. Just how pertinent it is, depends somewhat on the location of Ophrah, whose site has not been definitely identified. But there is little doubt of its being in the territory of Manasseh.[2] It may

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[1]Moses Gaster, The Samaritans, p. 7 ff., 49 f.

[2]Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 318 f. Possibly the site was Silet el Dhahr (ibid p. 327). But Peake says

readily have been one of the "shoulder" towns. The E passage, 6:8 ff., suggests that awe of the Amorites in whose land they have been living has been holding back the self-assertion of the Israelites. In view of the Midian menace, however, they rise to self-defense. Gideon comes forward as a leader, and all of the northern tribes obey his summons. It is the perfect illustration of Robinson's comment that the Israelites conquered the land not by defeating but by defending the Canaanites.

It is probable that this campaign, more than anything else, broke down the barriers between the old time Shechemites and the Israelites. Shechem would have been foolish to maintain her aristocratic dignity too stoutly once the Israelites had discovered the possibilities of confederation and had tasted victory against a common foe.

2. Abimelech -- Judges 9

Besides, there had been intermarriage. Gideon's Shechemite alliance does not seem to have been fully recognized, but Abimelech could not be denied. The old distinction between the Shechemites and the Ophrahites and peoples of other surrounding towns was disappearing. It would

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that Ophrah was Benjamite (Commentary, in loc.) Garstang assigns this passage as well as the Abimelech story to E, E2 and JE.

seem, too, that the Deuteronomic writer was right in accusing the Israelite people of doing what people have always been wont to do: running after the god of the aristocrats, in this case, Baal Berith of Shechem.[1]

Now, for the first time, Shechem seems to become definitely a part of Israel,[2] and the Israelites have access to both the holy mountain and the temple.

There is remarkable diversity in the interpretation by various authorities of the circumstances surrounding the Abimelech story.[3]

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[1]Judges 8:33 f., assigned to D by Driver, LOT, in loc.

[2]Eissfeldt, "Sichem", RGG 5 p. 471 f.

[3]Sellin and Noth, Das System der Zwölf Stämme Israels, quoted in Albright, Archeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 216 n., states that Shechem was a centralized place of worship at an early date. But Albright, ibid, contends that "in view of the semi-Canaanite character of Shechem around 1100, at the time of Abimelech, this seems improbable."

My own contention is that both are right. The walled city which has been excavated at Balata was, till the time of Abimelech, exclusive and essentially "foreign" in its worship. The "wind, water, light" inscription of which we have spoken, may reveal certain Greek linguistic affinities, and indicate Shechem as the home of the earliest Philistine settlers. Obermann, op. cit.

But the activity inside the city was only half of the story, and considerably less than half the religion. Here was the original "Beth-el". Montgomery, The Samaritans p.236.

Here, among fertile fields, in view of the mountains and the sea and the sunset, and amidst the coming and going of many peoples, there must have developed a sense of an "el" which was even greater than the "el" of any one of these individual forces of nature, greater than any of the tribal gods, to whom their devotees erected altars at this crossroads of Palestine, greater than "El" of the pantheon, who was himself greatest of many lesser gods. The spirit that pervaded this lovely spot where many peoples

Pederson interprets it as a "change of constitution, on the part of Shechem, emphasizing the fact that the government of most cities in Palestine during this period was by a council of elders, and that it was most unusual for any city to follow a single leader, as Shechem did Abimelech.[1]

The story of Abimelech[2] and his activities at Shechem are well known.[3] After Gideon's death and burial at

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worshipped in their own ways, was the spirit of all "els" in one. This was the one God, Elohim. Here was one basis of sound monotheistic faith. But before the Hebrew faith could develop, Elohim had to meet and become one with the transcendent idea of the god of terrible justice and complete righteousness, Yahweh.

Of course this theory rules out all the attractive suggestions concerning the origin of Baal Berith's name. A possible alternative is that those who made their camp and erected their altar in the neighborhood of Shechem were supposed to make obeisance to the city's Baal and give a covenant to keep the peace.

The picture above is certainly far too idyllic. The development of Israel's religion was no such simple, clear-cut process. If we were more pessimistic, we could say that the unquenchable moral ideal of the prophetic consciousness was continually battling for survival against the tendency of the Northern Kingdom to synchronize with naturalistic religion, and the tendency of the Southern Kingdom to substitute formalism and ritual for the severe ethic that was its strength.

[1] J. Pedersen, Israel, p. 7, 37.

[2] Abimelech means not "My father was king" but "the King (god) is Father" (Peake, Commentary, p. 265). It seems rather doubtful whether we can attribute to the passage the pious exegesis in regard to a conception of universal fatherhood which Peake evolves. G.F. Moore, Judges, ICC, in loc., says: "For the worshipper of Yahweh, he (God) is the king; for the Canaanites of Shechem, their Baal Berith."

[3] Here, again, we run into the type of critical problem which seems to pursue us whenever Shechem is mentioned. One constantly senses the presence of very old materials,

Ophra, his seventy sons took over the government of the district from there. But his son Abimelech, by a consort [1]

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much worked over. Peake, Commentary, p. 265, says the Abimelech story is an ancient source of great value to the historian. D makes no contribution to chapter 9. "Apparently he did not regard Abimelech as worthy to rank among the Judges, and therefore omitted this section, which was restored to its place by R."

Driver, LOT, p. 167, assigns 8:33-35 to D, based on the following account in chapter 9.

Garstang's analysis, Joshua and Judges, p. 43, assigns the whole of chapter 9 to E, with the following exceptions: v. 22 (JE-E); v. 26-41, concerning Gaal,(J); v. 42 (JE).

Winckler, Altorientalische Forschungen, p. 59 ff., (quoted G.F. Moore, Judges, ICC) gives an extremely detailed analysis of chapter 9:

J: v. 1-5, 21(?), 26-29, 41, 43 and 46-49.
E: v. 6 (7-20), 21(?), 23-25, 30-33, 34-35 (36-38 R?) 39, 40, 44, 45.

To which strand 50-54 belongs, he finds uncertain. D added v. 22, 55-57.

Studer, quoted, ibid, finds in the organization of the materials a concept of history similar to that of the Greeks at the time of Herodotus. We may add that it is the same type of compilatory process that we find later in the David-Saul cycles, but less purposive and well-conceived. This is more of a folk-tale, without the grandeur of the Saul-David material.

G. F. Moore's own analysis is that 8:30-32 is an introduction to chapter 9, but by P with no trace of D. 8:33b-35 is D's substitute for chapter 9. He tentatively assigns Gaal's story to J, the other account to E. Since there is no D in chapter 9, he concludes that this chapter was not in the Deuteronomic book of Judges. It did not fit into that scheme. But it was in the older Yahwist book which D worked over, and in which he substituted 8:33-35 for chapter 9. Abimelech's story is "one of the oldest in the book of Judges, and in many ways one of the most instructive," he says. It is a glimpse of conditions described in chapter 1. Note that Jerubaal alone is used for Abimelech's father in chapter 8, except verse 29, which is taken from 9:16.

[1] "Slave girl" :9:18. Moore, ibid, in loc., insists she was a free Canaanite woman and that 9:18 was just a mean remark. We should again be cautious of attributing too much historicity to details. The motif of the seventy (or seven) sons, only the youngest of whom escapes and puts a curse on the villains, is one of the commonest in folklore.

at Shechem, appealed to his mother's people. "Which is better," he asked, "to have seventy men rule over you, all the sons of Jerubaal, or to have one man rule over you?" And he added, "Also remember I am of your own flesh and blood." In view of subsequent developments, Abimelech's movement does not seem to have been one of the city of Shechem's again withdrawing from her association with the district. His idea seems rather to have been to acquire for himself the title of King of the Israelites, which his father is reported to have refused, leaving the loose confederation in the hands of a council.

Robinson calls attention to the fact that Abimelech's appeal is not on a basis of his Canaanite blood, but because his mother belonged to the city. He relies on "local" rather than racial relationships. The distinction, if our general findings in regard to the history of the city are correct to this point, seems an artificial one, but Robinson is certainly right in his contention that "we are approaching the stage when there is no longer any consciousness of diverse ancestry."[1]

At any rate, Abimelech's kinfolk give him seventy pieces of silver from the temple of Baal Berith,[2] with

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[1] Oesterley and Robinson, History of Israel I, p. 151 f.

[2] Baal Berith is still officially the local god of the city. Abimelech's mother's connections must have been good to get him this ready help from the temple itself. It has been frequently pointed out that the seventy shekles correspond with the seventy sons.

which he hires rogues to follow him. Then, going to his father's home in Ophrah, he slays all of his seventy brothers but the youngest, Jotham, who escapes.

> "Then all the citizens of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled and went and made Abimelech king, beside the terebinth connected with the sacred pillar[1] which was at Shechem." [2]

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[1]The ceremony is not in the city but at the sacred tree. Oesterley and Robinson read, with the LXX, "by the terebinth of the standing stone", i.e., the great stone of Josh. 24:26.

[2]Judges 9:6. Peake, Commentary, p. 265: Abimelech was not made king of the twelve tribes, or even of one whole tribe, but only of the town of Shechem and its neighborhood. He was on a par with the kings who are mentioned in the Song of Deborah. Peake thinks 9:22, "Abimelech held sway over all Israel", an exaggeration, and the chronological note that this rule lasted three years a redaction.

G.F. Moore, Judges, ICC, in loc., thinks that to regard the Abimelech episode as a forerunner of the kingdom is "precarious".. Wellhausen's contention (quoted, ibid) is probably the most logical. He regards the monarchy as an advance over the patriarchal rule of the nobles, as represented by the seventy sons. He points out that the story was written after the establishment of the kingdom, and that the author was interpreting events in the light of later history.

But to speak of whether Abimelech was head of one or ten tribes is certainly an anachronism. The literature organizing Hebrew history around the "twelve tribes" had not yet come into being, and "Israel" had no political boundry lines, but was an emerging ethnic consciousness. It seems to me that this experiment in kingship does definitely foreshadow Saul's accomplishment. Such important changes as the establishment of a monarchy in place of a theocracy do not occur full-blown. There are always experimental stages to important political changes. One or two revolutions must always fail before one is crowned with success. Moreover, the people of Saul's time seem well versed in the techniques of chosing a king. Many of the details are probably anachronisms of the historian who lived after the kingship had become established, but the apparent familiarity of the people with the idea of kingship seems real.

But Jotham did not give up without a struggle. Standing on the top of Mt. Gerizim, he made a speech. Possibly the words put in his mouth are from an ancient fable, but the import is plain. Gideon had refused to take the kingship which the people had offered to him. He had said, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you, since the Lord rules over you."[1] Was it, then, good faith to bestow this honor on his half-Shechemite son, who was willing enough to take it? The appeal loses much of its force if Abimelech's proposed leadership was for Shechem only. Jotham voiced the sentiments of the party always present in Israel, who were definitely opposed to the monarchy on the grounds that Israel should remain a theocracy.[2]

As a matter of fact, the whole Jotham interlude has within it elements of prophecy as well as history. Only, unlike the prophets, Jotham, having finished his speech, runs away. And Abimelech rules for three years. Zebul, the governor of Shechem, is his right hand man. Abimelech, as a matter of fact, seems to have moved his

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[1] Judges 8:23.

[2] Cf. the Saul narrative strand represented by I Sam. 10:19; also e.g., Hos. 8:4, 13:10 f., Ezek. 34. G.F. Moore, Judges, ICC, in loc., compares the "evil spirit" of v. 23 with the madness of Saul. See also C.R. North, "The Old Testament Estimate of the Monarchy", AJSL 48:1, p. 1 ff. North thinks that Jotham's fable was an already ancient protest against monarchy.

headquarters to Arumah,[1] and Zebul is in command in the city.[2] This again, would seem to indicate that Abimelech's kingship is a more than purely local affair.[3] At any rate, a party of opposition seems to have sprung up in Shechem. The Biblical statement[4] that the concern of the trouble-makers was the requital of the murder of the seventy other sons, does not sound official. They were, after all, not tribesmen of the Shechemites.

There seem to be duplicate accounts concerning the destruction of Shechem.[5] Verses 22-25 and 42-49 make one continuous narrative. Into this the story of Gaal, son of Obed,[6] who came to Shechem stirring up trouble, has been inserted. Who Gaal was is a mystery, but his trouble making seems to have been deliberate.[7] He chose a time

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[1]Arumah is usually located on Kh Ormē -"some seven miles to the south-east of the tower of Shechem at Balata . . . A fortress of mediaeval character now crowns the site and renders difficult a thorough investigation of the soil." Thebez may be at Tubas, "a strategic point on the highland track that connected Shechem and Dotham with Bethshean and the Jordan valley." Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 327.

[2]See v. 41

[3]Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 328, suggests the possibility of Zebul being Pharaoh's appointee. If so, he certainly was not a very efficient one.

[4]9:24

[5]Peake, Commentary, in loc.

[6]obed = slave

[7]Wellhasued and Kuenen think Gaal an Israelite. Moore feels he identifies himself with the Shechemites. G.F. Moore, Judges, ICC, in loc. His story has noticable similarities to Jotham's.

when the citizens of Shechem had been over-indulging during a vintage festival to taunt them with the fact that this very Abimelech and Zebul once served Hamor, the legendary anscestor of Shechem. But Zebul manages to warn his chief, who advances on the city by night. Gaal and his followers make no showing. Abimelech continues to live in Arumah, and Zebul banishes Gaal and his kin from Shechem.

In the other, more formal account, Abimelech fights against the city all day, and when he finally captures it, he slays all the people, razes the city, and sows it to salt.[1] The citizens of Migdal-Shechem take refuge in the crypt of the temple of El Berith. But Abimelech burns the temple down over their heads, so that a thousand people perish. Abimelech's own death during an attack on Thebez is attributed to God's requiting of the crime against his father, when Abimelech slew his seventy brothers.

"Also all the wickedness of the men of Shechem did God requite upon their heads, so that the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubaal came upon them."[2]

The Abimelech incident is primarily important from our point of view not only because it may connect Shechem with the earliest indication of a united Hebrew

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[1] A disposal not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament.

[2] 9:57. This working out of the curse is the necessary climax to the folk tale.

monarchy, but because it unquestionably marks the amalgamation of the heretofore exclusive city into the life and destinies of the house of Jacob. When the destroyed temple was rebuilt, there is little doubt but that the form of worship would be such as to include both the El Berith and the Israelitish-Yahweh elements.

With the opening of Shechem's gates, a new national sense must have developed in Israel, with Shechem as the capital. We may presume that such a period of national vigor preceded conditions as we find them in I Kings 12:1, but there is no mention of the city during the days of the United Monarchy. Yet it is at this period that the Joseph cycle must have taken shape, the legendary framework of the twelve tribes originated as a basis for Hebrew history, and the covenant code evolved from the primitive pentads of Moses and Joshua.

Shechem would undoubtedly have supported Saul, as Israel's "favorite son". But if the Hebrew monarchy was regarded as elective, as it undoubtedly was by Israel at least, then Solomon's being put on the throne was a breach of faith. Moreover funds for his extravagant spending could scarcely have been wrung from Judah's barren hills, and the burden must have fallen heavily upon the fertile territory of Ephraim and Manasseh.

There may have been considerable feeling, too, concerning his building of a temple, or rather a group of temples, for his own god and those of his foreign wives,

on Mt. Moriah. Establishment of such a sanctuary in the south might well be both an economic and religious blow to Shechem. Moreover, Mt. Moriah must have seemed, from the more naturalistic view of Shechemite religion, wholly inappropriate in its barrenness to ever become a proper place of worship. The southern writer's production of a story aimed to provide a degree of sanctity to the new sanctuary,[1] can scarcely have impressed the northern brethren.

Exactly how serious the offense seemed to the northerners depends on a point that is at present beyond our fathoming. That point is the "original" form of the ten commandments, how seriously they were taken at this time, and who did the altering that was performed by either the Shechemites or Jerusalemites at an early date. If these commandments already had considerable sanctity in Shechem, and if the last one was, as they claim, a command that worship in the promised land was to be centered at Gerizim, they would naturally feel very alarmed over Solomon's brazen intention of transferring that worship to Jerusalem. But there is also, of course, the possibility, which the Jews would be quick to point out, that Shechem tampered with the commandments at a later date, inserting the name of Gerizim as the place where people ought to worship, for their own selfish purposes.[2]

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[1] II Sam. 24.

[2] Gaster, The Samaritans, Appendix III, p. 185.

However, sanctified by a commandment or not, Shechem must have felt the security of tradition, and although Solomon's temple took on much of its grandeur from the descriptions of later writers, it was probably thought of by everyone as a new and rival institution.

3. Samaritan traditions

It will be well to pause here to examine the Samaritan traditions in regard to this period, as reported by Moses Gaster, who devoted himself for a quarter of a century to tracking down the history, literature and traditions of the remnant of a Samaritan sect in Shechem, who still proudly insist that they are the true observers of the law and upholders of the original Hebrew traditions.[1]

Their history, as told by them, begins with the settlement of the tribes in Palestine. They are descendents from Ephraim and Manasseh, with many adherents from other tribes. Their priests, they claim, descended in an unbroken line from Pinehas and Eleazar, sons of Aaron. Joshua himself erected the altar on Mt. Gerizim, and on the stones inscribed the commandments. Rivalry arose, eventually, within the priestly family, and Eli, representing the Ithamar branch, believing himself offended, separated from Gerizim, and set up a sanctuary at Shiloh, the beginning of a movement that led, finally, to the establishment of the Jerusalem temple. Here, however, the Eleazar

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[1]Moses Gaster, The Samaritans, Schweich Lectures, 1923.

priesthood came into its own. Eli was joined in his rebellion by Samuel, descendent of Korah. During the priesthood of Uzzi, by Samaritan chronology 260 years after the entrance of the Hebrews into Palestine, the ark disappeared, having been placed in a cave on Mt. Gerizim by Uzzi. The cave suddenly closed, enveloping it, as a sign of God's displeasure at Eli's rebellion. This ushered in the period of "Fanuta", God's disfavour, under which the world is now existing, and which will continue until repentance brings in the time of favour, "Rahuta".[1]

Now Eli had taken with him from Shechem a copy of the law of Moses identical with that now posessed by the Samaritans, and this copy was placed in the foundations of the temple of Solomon.[2] The Samaritans, reports Gaster, point the finger of scorn at the origin of the house of David, and at the birth of Solomon from Bathsheba.. The temple at Jerusalem was not Bet Mikdash (house of holiness) to them, but Bet Maktash (house of shame).[3]

It is, of course, impossible to attach historic value to such undated, legendary material. But it is interesting that in its indication of an early date of the rivalry between the two sanctuaries, it coincides with the

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[1]Cf. the Jewish legend of II Maccabees, c. 2.

[2]This, of course, brings to mind the document found by Hilkiah, the priest, in the course of the temple repairs, 621 B.C.

[3]Gaster, op.cit.,p. 9 ff.

convictions at which we have already arrived.

The Samaritans, it might be added, resent strenuously the story of II Kings 17, which makes them not merely a dissenting sect, but a "sect of pagan origin and doubtful proselyte character, being converted through the fear of lions."[1]

4. Obscurity under the United Kingdom

We have little information about Shechem from the time of Abimelech and Gaal until we find the city as the center of the Israelite kingdom and the traditional place where the king, it seems, must submit to election and be crowned.

Kittel feels quite sure that after Abimelech's death, Shechem was again lost to Israel. There is, he points out, no account of Saul posessing Shechem, and he concludes that David opened its doors. Under Solomon it was firmly in the posession of Israel, and remained Israelite from then on.[2] It would seem, however, that such an important conquest on the part of David would have received some mention. Meek holds that Yahwist prophets propagandized for David's kingdom in the northern cities.[3]

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[1]Gaster, The Samaritans, p. 13.

[2]R. Kittel, Geschichte des Volkes Israel I, p. 265 f.

[3]Meek, "Some Religious Origins of the Hebrews", AJSL 37, p. 129.

The sources, far from straightening out, seem only to become more complicated as we approach really historic events,[1] for at the same time we reach the day when the two kingdoms come to the parting of the ways. From that time on, neither can be expected to write quite disinterestedly about the other. And it is well to remember that possibly none of our major Biblical sources had yet been put in writing. It is my contention that the post-exilic difficulties of the rival Jerusalem and Shechemite sects were nothing new, but had their roots in the age-old jealousies that grew, originally, out of the building of Solomon's temple. I believe that jealousy was deep-rooted and vital enough so that it should be born in mind throughout our critical examination of Old Testament documents. We suspect, for instance, that Jeroboam must have been a grand national hero of the Northern Kingdom,[2] but our knowledge is meager, indeed.

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[1]Peake sees in chapter 12 similarities to the II Sam. 9-20 source, but admits that this report is not favorable to David. He thinks it may be an extract from the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. The LXX shows a number of discrepancies, e.g., Rehoboam is sixteen instead of forty, Shemaiah, the Enlamite, rather than Ahijah gives the pieces of garment (all twelve) to Jeroboam. Also there are differences in order and midrash-like additions.

[2]"Evidently Jeroboam's rebellion against Solomon was more serious than is implied in chapter 11, and the prestige of his throne had suffered considerably." Peake, Commentary, p. 300. There is the question, too of how far Egypt instigated the rebellion of the Northern Kingdom. Though in no position to protest, she can scarcely have been over-joyed at the success of David and Solomon. Cf.11:14-40 and notes in the Cambridge Bible (Barnes). The Pharaoh protests a bit too vigorously over Jeroboam's return to his native land.

E. Jeroboam

I Kings 12 tells us that Rehoboam came to Shechem,[1] "for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king." It must have been a good deal of a shock when the messengers brought him word that Jeroboam, who had led the northern party of opposition to his father (whether the opposition was political or economic or possibly a combination of the two) had suddenly returned to Ephraim and had some remarks to make before the coronation could take place as scheduled.

In the reported conference between the northern and southern leaders, Jeroboam and his "assembly of Israel" seem almost too much in the right. Israel's narrator forgets to have her display a proud spirit in his concern to absolve her completely of responsibility for the split in the kingdom. She is willing to continue to serve Judah if only the new king will "lighten the galling service" and the heavy yoke which Solomon laid upon her. Even Rehoboam's wise counsellors see the reasonableness of the demand and the discretion of yielding to it. But Rehoboam follows the advice of his youthful comrades and replies:

"My father made your yoke heavy,
But I will add to your yoke;
My father chastised you with whips,
But I will chastise you with scorpions."

What could he have expected other than the cry that arose:

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[1] Peake, Commentary, in loc.: "At the end of Solomon's reign, the prestige of the older scenes of Israel's history seem to have revived. Jerusalem is no longer the important center, and Ahijah, the prophet of the ancient sanctuary of Shiloh, is the religious leader."

"What portion have we in David?
Yea, we have no heritage in the son of Jesse.
To your tents, O Israel!
See now to your own house, David!"

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[1]F. W. Farrar, First Book of Kings , Expositor's Bible, in loc., points out some interesting LXX variants. Verse 4 reads: "Thy father made his yoke grievous upon us, and made grievous to us the meats of his table." This is usually interpreted as a protest against the extravagance of Solomon and the burden which his personal spending put on the whole nation. In line with it is the variant of verse 16, quoted by Farrar: "Now feed thy own house, David." Now the question of the temple as a place of sacrifice has not yet arisen in Shechem. We can imagine that Baal Berith would not have concurred with Yahweh's discrimination between Cain and Abel (J) but would have preferred the farmer to the shepherd. The Joseph tribes had enthusiastically accepted Yahweh. He may at this time have been edging Baal Berith out of his own temple. Was it northern "converts" who displayed the fresh enthusiasms that gave the Hebrew religion its impetus and developed the prophetic fervor of the next century, while the "second generation" Yahwists of Jerusalem had already begun to go ritualistic? Is there a possibility that an additional difficulty between the two kingdoms was that the Jerusalem priests were endeavoring to dictate the policy of the northerners in regard to the slaughter of animals for food, and that the regulations which were perfectly practical in Judah, seemed unnecessarily difficult to put into practice in Shechem?

J.B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament, p. 90, points out that the story of the cultus in Jerusalem alone traces back to propitiatory sacrifice for its beginnings, (II Sam. 24). At Shechem, Beersheba, Bethel and other sanctuaries, the sacrifice was originally eucharistic.

R.A.S. Macalister, A Century of Excavation in Palestine, p. 271, says that Solomon's temple was a new departure in Semitic religion. The only previous temples aside from the one at Shechem were those of the Philistine deities, and this, rather than the P addition to the Dinah story, would be evidence of the non-Semitic character of the early Shechemites. Shiloh is also to be excepted, as an offshoot of Shechem, and Macalister thinks, probably also non-Semitic and featuring the cult of the ark. Yahweh was worshipped in a tent, the Canaanite gods in open "high places" with their rude stone pillars. See also Macalister,

Then the assembly of Israel makes Jeroboam their king. Rehoboam returns to Jerusalem, and is deterred from marching north with an army to bring Israel again into the fold, only by Shemaiah's prophecy that such is not the will of the Lord.

But Jeroboam, being a practical person, realizes, our report says, that if the people go to Jerusalem to worship, he will soon lose his political hold over them. So he makes the two golden calves and sets them up in Bethel and Dan for the people of the Northern Kingdom to worship, reorganizing religion, appointing priests, and building altars as he sees fit. Driver thinks this story of the claves may be the work of a compiler.[1] It sounds like a story which might well be told in the Southern Kingdom to explain the presence of the calves at these two sanctuaries. But it may be that there was definite official repudiation of Yahwism which nevertheless survived.[2]

The Philistines, p. 123.

But the remains of such open high places are to be found on the tops of both Gerizim and Ebal. The Joachin and Boaz and the two Israelite altars in the temple in the city belong to a slightly later period, when Yahweh had firmly established himself there. See H. M. Wiener, Altars of the Old Testament, especially illustrations and descriptions of these seventh century (?) altars. See also S. A. Cook, Religion in Palestine in the Light of Archaeology, p. 96 f., 187 f.

[1]Driver, LOT, p. 194.

[2]If Jeroboam had made them as reported, we might have expected one to be placed at Shechem, unless, possibly, Shechem refused to be a party to the back-sliding.

As to Jeroboam's "sin" in establishing other sanctuaries, and appointing non-Levitical priests, or his fears lest the people go to Jerusalem for their religion, the narrator seems somewhat premature. Or was Deuteronomy Mosaic?

The fact that Jeroboam "built Shechem in the highlands of Ephraim and dwelt there, probably means that he rebuilt or fortified it, while the report that he "also went out from there and built Penuel", which lies east of the Jordan, may refer to Manasseh's colonizing project, to which reference has already been made.

This brief report of the fortification of the city and its entering into a colonization project has the ring, from its very brevity, of verity. But it brings up an interesting and important question. If we had been told that the city was completely destroyed and its inhabitants wiped out, there could not have been more complete silence about it during the next two hundred years. No prophet mentions it.[1] And as though to reciprocate, the prophets form no part of the Samaritan (Shechemite) scriptures.

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[1] There is one reference to it in Jer. 41:5, which merely mentions some men of Shechem who were taking offerings to Jerusalem. In fact the only other two places where the name appears in the Old Testament from here on, are in a geneological note of the Chronicler, 7:28, and the line "I will divide Shechem" in Psalm 60:6. The silence in regard to Shechem is too complete to be accidental, but whether it was a conspiracy of silence on the part of the prophets themselves, or whether references were weeded out by late editing, is a problem that needs special consideration.

Neither does the Samaritan Pentateuch contain the early Genesis stories. It is therefore presumed that it was adopted prior to the canonization, if such it may be called, of even the Pentateuch. The Samaritan scriptures contain only this abbreviated form of the Pentateuch, and an early version of Joshua.

Our problem is to discover the relationship between Shechem and Jerusalem at this time which would account for these peculiar facts. Was a conspiracy of silence at work against Shechem, by northern as well as southern prophets? Prophets are not known, elsewhere, to refrain from mentioning those they dislike, and it would seem impossible for Shechem to lose all religious and political significance so suddenly.

It is possible, of course, that we have been over-estimating Shechem's importance in this period. Perhaps the city just happened to be chosen as a convenient spot for Rehoboam's coronation. The capital may have shifted from town to town with the frequent changes of dynasty. Ahab's building of Samaria is frequently referred to as doing for the Northern Kingdom what David's building of Jerusalem did for the United Kingdom. It gave Israel a new capital upon which to focus its attention and lavish its gifts, a new capital which was free from ancient prejudices and alliances.

F. Deuteronomic reform

1. Textual questions

Religiously, according to our Jerusalem-edited scriptures, Bethel dominated the Northern Kingdom, and worship centered around her calf-cult. But let us remember for a moment that the JE document was compiled, presumably around 650 B.C., and about this same time Deuteronomy, whatever its origin, was being worked over and revised to make it a document which should center the Yahweh worship of both the fallen Israel, and Judah in the temple at Jerusalem. Now who would Jerusalem have to fear as likely to stand in the way of such a plan? The priests of the syncretizing cults would of course oppose them. No less was to be expected. The problem of turning the people against these sanctuaries was simply one of showing the worship in them for what it was, thoroughly unworthy of the great and loving God of Israel, Yahweh. But such tactics might not prove effective against Shechem. At Shechem, not in Jerusalem, had been the first great national shrine. Here, and not in Jerusalem, had developed the first great codes of Hebrew law. Mt. Gerizim and not Mt. Moriah, had been from time immemorial the holy mountain of Palestine. In short, if the reform was to be put over successfully, the less said about Shechem and Mt. Gerizim the better. The evidence is that the pre-Deuteronomists must have agreed on a policy of silence in regard to Jerusalem's great rival, and adhered strictly to their plan.

We cannot here go into the origin of Deuteronomy. My own conviction is that the original document, chapters 12-26, 28,[1] was from the north, but not from Shechem. It was in line with the movement to "liberalize" religion in which Shechem did not apparently share. I suspect it of being Bethel's version of the Covenant Code of Shechem.[2] It found its way to Jerusalem after the northern exile, and was used by the prophetic-priestly reform party as a basis for their program. Deut. 11:26-30 and 27:1-26 are a framework of early Shechemite judgements, used by the writers of c. 12-26, 28 to give their document the authenticity of coming from Shechem.[3]

Now the Deuteronomists, who wrote the two introductions for the document, realized that this framework was valuable in establishing the authenticity of the document and retained it. But in this framework was mention, naturally, of Gerizim, the sacred mountain where the ceremonies were to be held. This simply would not do.

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[1] J. Bewer, Literature of the Old Testament, p. 121 ff.

[2] Cf. J.P. Peters, Religion of the Hebrews, p. 344 n. Peters sees the counterpart of the "kindly" code of Deuteronomy in the ritualistic Holiness Code.

[3] Meyer-Luther, Die Israeliten , p. 552 (quoted by H. Wheeler Robinson, Deuteronomy and Joshua (New Century Bible).

In chapter 11 the identity of the mountain was confused by describing it as being at considerable distance from its true location.[1] In chapter 27 a different technique was used: the text was altered to put the blessing on Ebal and the curse on Gerizim.[2] A similar alteration, changing the parts of Geriaim and Ebal in the ceremony, was made in the text of Josh 8:21. It was the same hand, undoubtedly, that made the first commandment into two, to compensate for omitting the last one,which authorized worship at Gerizim.

Probably it is the fact that both changes or neither must be admitted that has made critical scholars well-content to accuse Shechem of being the one that did the changing., in their Deuteronomy, at a considerably later date. But it is quite impossible to understand why, if Deuteronomy followed Shechem's tradition, Shechem should

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[1]Driver, Deuteronomy, ICC, p 133. But Driver excuses this on the grounds that the passage is symbolic, and the spot described is typically "Canaanite".

[2]The blessing would undoubtedly be on the right hand mountain, there being abundant evidence that this was the side the Hebrews considered "lucky", but this does not help, because we do not know whether they were facing forward in the direction they were travelling, or eastward, as they would naturally face in pointing the compass. Von Gall, Altisrael Kultstätten, p. 107 f.

In Josephus, Ant. 4:8:44, Moses leaves instructions concerning an altar near Shechem and an antiphonal service. But each group of six tribes is to "pray for the best blessings upon those who are diligent about the worship of God and the observation of his laws and who did not reject what Moses had said.to them." There was no curse. This report seems the essence of discretion. Josephus apparently wanted no part in the controversy, which was still going on.

later decide to change it.[1] It is also hard to understand why, amidst a rather obvious conspiracy of silence about Shechem and her sanctuary, such a reference could appear, even in this altered form, as a framework for the Jerusalemite's principal document.

The further question occurs as to when the Shechemites received their Pentateuch, which is, after all, essentially like that of the orthodox Jews.[2] Were these changes made in the copy as Shechem received it, and did she then change them back to correspond with her own traditions and earlier documents? Or were these passages, even in their altered form, added much later? In this case the silence of Jerusalem in regard to her rival would be even more complete than our present text indicates.

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[1]Driver, Deuteronomy, ICC, p. 295 (re Deut. 27): "It seems that an older injunction (JE) v. 5-7a, respecting a sacrifice on Ebal, has been taken up by D (or a follower of D) supplemented by the addition of 7b, and combined with the instructions written in his own words, for the inscription on the stones of the Deuteronomic law." It would be interesting to know whether the Samaritan text also shows a discrepency in style at this point.

[2]J.E.H. Thomson scorns the idea that the Samaritans would accept their Pentateuch from their bitter enemies, the Jews, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. He thinks they had their complete Torah before the fall of Samaria, holding that the sacrificial terminology used by Amos and Hosea presupposes acquaintance with the terminology peculiar to the Priests' code. On linguistic grounds, he claims the Samaritan Pentateuch and the massoretic parted company not later than the time of Solomon. See review of Dr. Thomson's The Samaritans: Their Testimony to the Religion of Israel by A.R.S. Kennedy, Expos.Times 31, p. 374 ff.

2. Attitude of the Prophets

Gaster has pointed out[1] the obviously conciliatory attitude of Jeremiah and Ezekiel toward the northern tribes.[2] They are considered distinctly a part of the Hebrew nation, and there is no mention of the depleted condition due to deportations, the foreign settlements and the consequent mixed blood of Israel. We would judge from Jer. 41:5 that the inhabitants of Shechem had concurred in the centralization of worship at Jerusalem, for we read of the "men of Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria -- eighty in all, with their clothes rent, their heads shaved and their bodies gnashed," who come weeping and "bearing cereal offerings and frankincense, to present them in the house of the Lord." The explanation that they are on their way to the ruined Jerusalem to offer their gifts at the altar of the temple there, would seem to mean that Shechem had completely capitulated. It scarcely seems possible to believe.[3]

Gaster thinks Ezekiel was of one of the northern tribes, and that his plan was to reorganize Palestine with the secular authority remaining in Jerusalem in the hands of Judah, but with religious headquarters at Gerizim under

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[1] Op. cit., p. 15 f.

[2] The modern Samaritan service as reported by Montgomery, op. cit., p. 44, has much to say about "circumcision of heart".

[3] Hitzig, Der Prophet Jeremiah, p. 331 (quoted, Smith's

the Sadokite family there who claimed to be descended directly from Eleazer and Pinehas. He suggests that the name Shechem or Gerizim actually appeared in his description of the temple, and was later omitted.[1]

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[1]Gaster, op. cit., p. 15 f.; cf. Ezek. 37:16 f., 48:11.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION: LATER HISTORY

It would take another paper to discuss the post-exilic difficulties between Jerusalem and Shechem. It is at this time that the "Cult of the Samaritans" is generally thought of as coming into being. Montgomery says their terminus a quo is 722, with the return of the priests to Bethel, and their ad quem the time of Alexander and the Sanballet stories reported by Josephus. The Samaritan aristocrats of this period were probably the "adversaries" who worried the Jews so much. Certainly both sides seem to have found amazing ways of being annoying, resorting to such petty tricks as strewing each other's temples with bones, or lighting signal fires on the hills, with the thought of confusing each other's calendars.

The same story told in Ezra 4:1, ff., concerning how the adversaries of Benjamin and Judah offered their help in rebuilding the Jerusalem temple and were scornfully refused, is told, with little variation, concerning the building of the Samaritan temple. The Samaritans, or Gaster, who champions their case so well, would never agree with Montgomery that "the crystalization of the dissenters into an independent sect was due rather to the excommuni-

cation by the Jewish church than of their own free will," and that driven out by Nehemiah's policy, they were forced for religion's sake as well as self-preservation to the organization of an independent cult."[1]

We grieve to desert the Shechemites at this critical stage in their career, but we can do no more now than to report. objectively, the few additional references which we have, directly, to the city, in Biblical literature and Josephus.

Nu. 26:31 (P), a geneological notice

Josh. 20:7 (P): Shechem is made a city of refuge.

I Chron. 7:28, another geneological notice

Ps. 60:6, "I will divide Shechem"

Josephus, Ant. 4:8:44: We have spoken of the parallel to Deut. 11:29, reporting the antiphonal service without the curse.

Josephus, Ant. 5:1:24: Shechem is made a city of refuge.

Josephus, Ant. 5:2:28, Joshua's great assembly and final blessing after living at Shechem for twenty years.

Josephus, Ant. 11:8:1, ff., story of Sanballat and Manasseh, reported as in the time of Philip of Macedon. Compare the date with Nehemiah c.4.[2]

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[1] Montgomery, op. cit., p. 48 ff.

[2] Josephus' report tells how, in the time of Philip of Macedon, Manasseh, brother of the high priest Jaddua of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, Darius' representative in Samaria. Sanballat thought

Josephus, Ant. 12:1:11 mentions the new Samaritan sanctuary built under Alexander

Josephus, Ant. 13:9:1 and BJ 1:2:6 are mentions of the destruction of the Gerizim sanctuary at the time of John Hyrcanus.

The apocryphal notices of Ben Sirach 1:26, 50:25-26, Jubilees 24, T.Levi 2:1,6:8f., and the quotations from the ancient tract in Acts 7:16, are without obvious historical import.

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this would mean the good will of Jerusalem, but Manasseh is told by the Jerusalemites and especially by his brother to either divorce his wife or stay away from the altar. Sanballat had made Manasseh many promises, including that of building him a temple of his own at Gerizim, better than the one at Jerusalem. Many of the priesthood revolted to Manasseh.

Meanwhile, however, Darius, who kept putting off the project until he should subdue the Macedonians, was defeated at the battle of Isis. Now the high priest sent a message of his fidelity to Darius to Alexander while the latter was besieging Tyre. Sanballat offered Alexander his allegience, and suggested building the temple at Gerizim as a means of keeping the nation divided. But things went awray when Sanballat died and Alexander decided to make up with the priest at Jerusalem.

Josephus further reports (Ant. 11:8:6) how Alexander was met by the Samaritans a short way from Jerusalem. They asked him to come and do honor to their temple at Shechem. Then they asked him to remit their seventh year tribute as he had promised to do for the Jerusalemites, saying that they were Hebrews, too. Alexander couldn't make up his mind whether they really were Hebrews or not, and promised to investigate on his return from Egypt.

Alexander died before the investigation could be made, but "the temple on Mt. Gerizim remained, and if anyone were accused by those of Jerusalem of having eaten things common or having broken the Sabbath, or any other crime of like nature, he fled away to the Shechemites and said that he was accused unjustly."

Cf. frequent mentions of Sanballat in Nehemiah, where he is always represented as annoying concerning the building of the walls: 2:10, 19; 3:33; 4:1; 6:1-14; 13:28.

Vespasian replaced the destroyed city with Neapolis.[1]

Our one reference in the New Testament to the ancient seat of Palestine's faith (aside from the quotation in Acts), is the story of the Samaritan woman included in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John. As she draws water from the ancient well of Jacob, outside the gates of Shechem, she inquires of the traveller whom she has recognized as a prophet:

"Our fathers worshipped God at this mountain, and yet you Jews say that the place where people must worship God is at Jerusalem."

And after all our investigations of the relative claims of the two sanctuaries and the rival cults, we must of course come back to the Prophet's final answer, "Neither at this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth."

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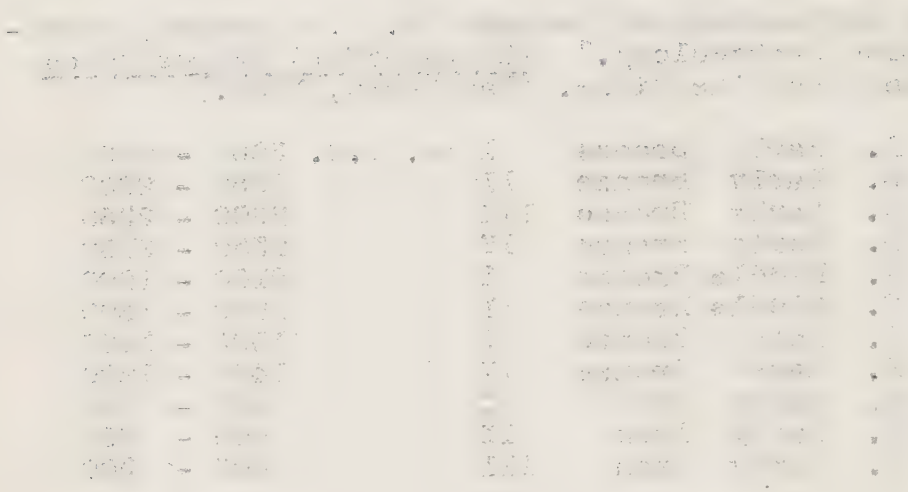
[1]Smith's Bible Dictionary, "Shechem"

APPENDIX

Table of Archaeological Periods "W. F. Albright, "Syro-Palestinian Archaeology." The Haverford Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible. (New Haven, 1938.)

A.	Early	Bronze	I	ca. B.C.	3200 - 2850
B.	Early	Bronze	II		2850 - 2600
C.	Early	Bronze	III		2600 - 2350
D.	Early	Bronze	IV		2350 - 2100
E.	Middle	Bronze	I		2100 - 1900
F.	Middle	Bronze	II		1900 - 1500
G.	Late	Bronze	I		1500 - 1400
H.	Late	Bronze	II		1400 - 1200
I.	Early	Iron	I		1200 - 900
J.	Early	Iron	II		900 - 600
K.	Early	Iron	III		600 - 300



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Abbreviations

AASOR, Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

AJSL, American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature.

BASOR, Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

JBL, Journal of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

PEFQS, Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.

RGG, Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.

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